



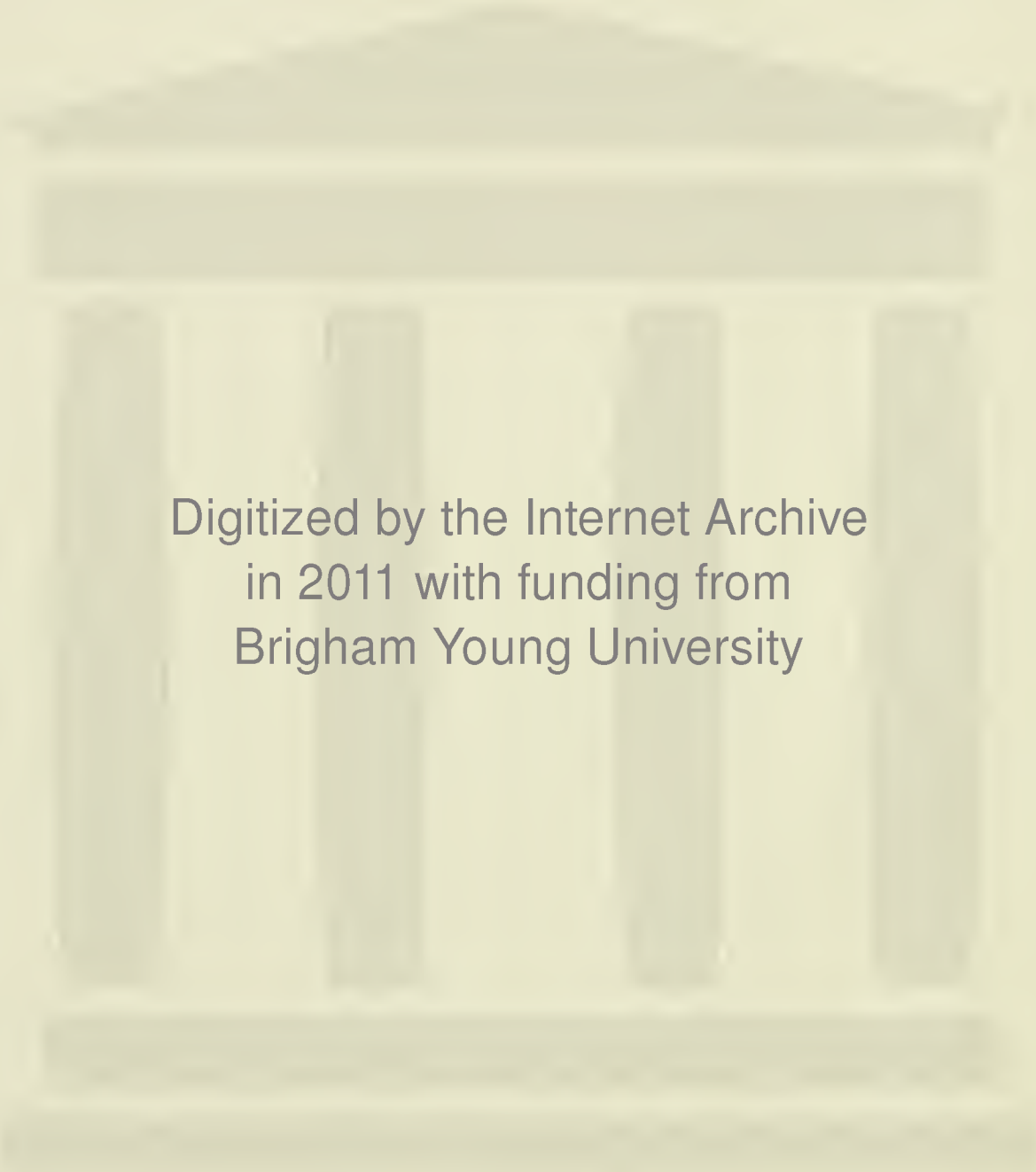


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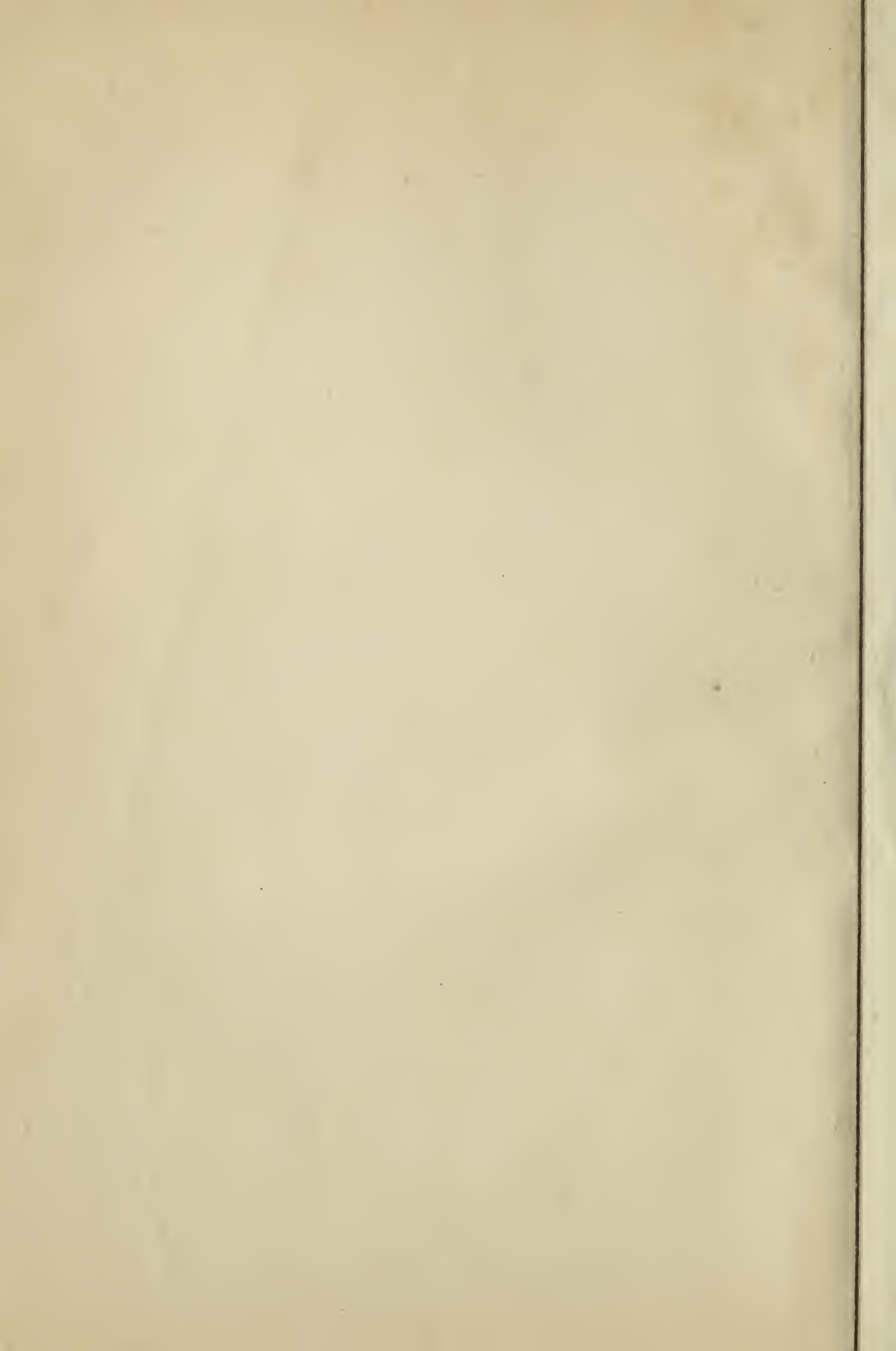


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THE SELECT POETICAL WORKS OF ALEXANDER POPE.

IN ONE VOLUME.



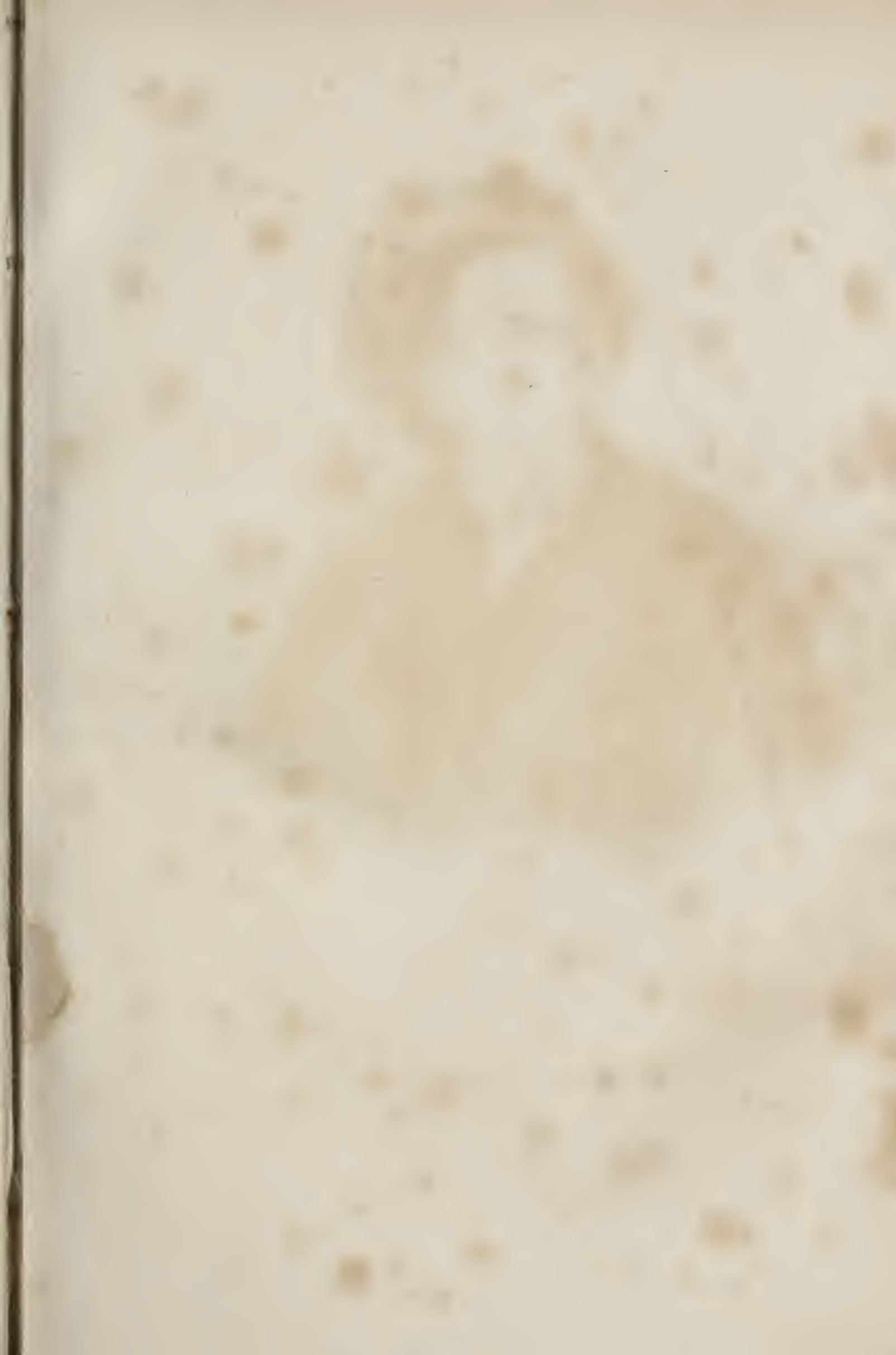
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THE SELECT  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
ALEXANDER POPE.

*WITH THE LIFE AND PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR.*

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# THE LIFE OF ALEXANDER POPE.

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THIS highly-distinguished poet was born in London, in the year 1688, where his father was a tradesman, and acquired considerable property, with which he retired to a purchase he had made at Binfield, in Windsor Forest.

Our poet, being from his infancy of a sickly habit, was educated mostly at home; and his father being a rigid catholic, and attached to the cause of James II., very naturally imparted to his son those principles of religion and politics which he retained throughout life. His son began early to read, and he had scarcely perused some of the English poets before he courted the muse, and exhibited such specimens of versification and fancy as are rarely found at his tender age. His pastorals were shown in manuscript to Sir William Turnbull, in the year 1704; and Wycherley, Walsh, and others, were proud to encourage so promising a genius. He soon after began his Windsor Forest, which, it is said, he used to compose under a beech-tree, on which lady Gower carved these words:

‘Here Pope sang.’

During her life the letters were cut new every three or four years, but they have since been suffered to decay.

As his poems became circulated, his acquaintance was courted by the most distinguished characters of his day; nor can we be surprised at their admiration of a youth who produced the alterations from Chaucer’s *Wife of Bath*, and the



Translation of Sappho to Phaon, at the age of fourteen; the Pastorals, at sixteen; and the Essay on Criticism, at nineteen. It may be observed, too, that he had no sooner become an author, than he began to feel his superiority; and in his ambition to be crowned sovereign of the poetical world, he soon involved himself in contests with his less fortunate brethren, some of whom he attacked without much justice, and all without any great provocation. It was one of the most remarkable circumstances in his history, that he inspired dread almost as soon as he had attracted admiration.

When about the age of twenty-three, he came to London, and entered, not unsparingly, into its gaieties and gallantries, although his weakly person and constitution were not very well adapted to irregular pleasures. The unfortunate lady, whose memory he has consecrated in an elegy, is supposed to have been one who first inspired him with the passion of love; and he afterwards coquetted with Lady Mary Wortley Montague, and formed a connexion, somewhat between the platonic and the amorous, with Miss Martha Blount, whose name occurs frequently in the following pages.

In the year 1711, he produced the Rape of the Lock, which at once placed him, in point of invention, at the head of all living poets, and which yet remains without a rival. In 1713 he issued proposals for his translation of the Iliad, and the first four books came out in 1715. The success of this work was such as to enable him to leave the house at Binfield altogether, and reside at a house at Twickenham; where the formation of his celebrated garden and grotto became the amusement and pride of many years of his life. Here he obtained the friendship and intimacy of Lord Burlington, Lord Peterborough, and the other distinguished characters, whose letters make up his published correspondence.

His life, indeed, passed in such prosperity as few men of genius have attained by their own efforts. He associated, with the utmost freedom, with all the distinguished characters of his day, with men and women of rank and literary reputation. Yet to none of them was he indebted for that kind



of patronage which is usually thought most desirable. His wealth, which was very considerable, was the fair reward of his talents, bestowed by the public; and, without disregarding the maxims of economy, he lived upon an equality with most of those whom he visited. He certainly, however, might have lived with more comfort, if he had not formed the connexion already alluded to, with Martha Blount, who by some means secured his affection or his sympathy, and tyrannized over him by all the tricks of a selfish and capricious mind.

About the year 1743, his constitution, which was always infirm, began to give way to disease; and although he lingered through several months, death had made very rapid progress in the month of May, 1744. On the sixth of that month he was all day delirious, which he mentioned four days after, as a sufficient humiliation of the vanity of man. He died in the evening of the thirtieth, so placidly, that the attendants did not discern his last minute. He was buried at Twickenham, near his father and mother, where a monument has been erected to him by his commentator, Dr. Warburton.

As few men enjoyed a more envied superiority during their lives, it may be said, with equal truth, that few have been more generally honoured by posterity. In every collection of poetry, Pope stands pre-eminent. No author is oftener read, and none oftener quoted: and he owes this preference to what some critics have objected to him, namely, that he preferred sense and reason to imagination. But does not the unrivalled popularity of his works show, at the same time, that the preference he gave is that of truth and nature, since it is an acknowledged fact, that men read the higher efforts of the sublime muse as tasks, but recur to the writings of Pope as to a never-ending pleasure? But, whatever may be in this, the author of the Rape of the Lock, and of the Eloisa, cannot be denied such powers of invention and of pathos as rarely are to be met with. These two poems have produced many imitations, but unquestionably no rival whose pretensions can be allowed.



As the refiner of versification, and the poet of reason, sense, and satire, Pope stands at the head of a school the most numerous of any. Among his imitators, indeed, we find almost all the names of any considerable merit since his days; and if invention has been too much neglected, it may on the other hand be said, that versification has been so much improved, that slovenly rhymes, want of harmony, and rugged lines, are no longer tolerated, and no longer excusable. Pope has the honour, therefore, of advancing English poetry one important step towards perfection, by refining its language, and smoothing the way towards those efforts of the sublime and the pathetic, which before his time were obscured by uncouth measures, or mixed with pedantic quaintnesses.

His private character is not so consistent with the sense and morals which pervade his works, as could be wished, Yet while he aimed at the grosser gaieties of life, he had many good qualities. He was a most affectionate son, and a steady friend; and it is probable, that the connexion with the lady who contributed most to the vexation of his latter days, by gaining an improper ascendancy over him, was the result of sympathy for her weakness, or a consciousness that the undisguised freedom of their connexion had endangered her reputation.

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**PASTORALS;**  
WITH  
**A DISCOURSE ON PASTORAL.**  
WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1704.

---

*Rura mihi, et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes;  
Flumina amem, sylvasque, inglorius!*

---

VIRG.

The Pastorals were written at the age of sixteen, and then passed through the hands of Mr. Walsh, Mr. Wycherley, G. Granville (afterwards Lord Lansdowne), Sir William Trumbull, Dr. Garth, Lord Halifax, Lord Somers, Mr. Maynwaring, and others. All these gave our author the greatest encouragement, and particularly Mr. Walsh, whom Mr. Dryden, in his Postscript to Virgil, calls the best critic of his age. 'The author (says he) seems to have a particular genius for this kind of poetry, and a judgement which much exceeds his years. He has taken very freely from the ancients; but what he has mixed of his own with theirs, is no way inferior to what he has taken from them. It is not flattery at all to say, that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age.' His Preface is very judicious and learned.' Letter to Mr. Wycherley, April, 1705. The Lord Lansdowne about the same time, mentioning the youth of our Poet, says (in a printed Letter of the Character of Mr. Wycherley), 'that if he goes on as he has begun in his Pastoral way, as Virgil first tried his strength, we may hope to see English poetry vie with the Roman,' &c. Notwithstanding the early time of their production, the author esteemed these as the most correct in the versification, and musical in the numbers, of all his works. The reason for his labouring them into so much softness, was, doubtless, that this sort of poetry derives almost its whole beauty from a natural ease of thought, and smoothness of verse; whereas that of most other kinds consists in the strength and fulness of both. In a letter of his to Mr. Walsh about this time, we find an enumeration of several niceties in versification, which perhaps have never been strictly observed in any English poem except in these Pastorals. They were not printed till 1709.



## A DISCOURSE ON PASTORAL POETRY.\*

THERE are not, I believe, a greater number of any sort of verses than of those which are called Pastorals, nor a smaller than those which are truly so. It therefore seems necessary to give some account of this kind of poem; and it is my design to comprise in this short paper the substance of those numerous dissertations the critics have made on the subject, without omitting any of their rules in my own favour. You will also find some points reconciled, about which they seem to differ; and a few remarks, which, I think, have escaped their observation.

The original of poetry is ascribed to that age which succeeded the creation of the world; and as the keeping of flocks seems to have been the first employment of mankind, the most ancient sort of poetry was probably pastoral. It is natural to imagine, that the leisure of those ancient shepherds admitting and inviting some diversion, none was so proper to that solitary and sedentary life as singing; and that in their songs they took occasion to celebrate their own felicity. From hence a poem was invented, and afterwards improved to a perfect image of that happy time; which, by giving us an esteem for the virtues of a former age, might recommend them to the present. And since the life of shepherds was attended with more tranquillity than any other rural employment, the poets choose to introduce their persons, from whom it received the name of Pastoral.

A pastoral is an imitation of the action of a shepherd, or one considered under that character. The form of this imitation is dramatic, or narrative, or mixed of both; the fable simple, the manners not too polite nor too rustic: the thoughts are plain, yet admit a little quickness and passion, but that short and flowing: the expression humble, yet as pure as the language will afford; neat, but not florid; easy, and yet lively. In short, the fable, manners, thoughts, and expressions, are full of the greatest simplicity in nature.

\* Written at sixteen years of age.



The complete character of this poem consists in simplicity, brevity, and delicacy; the two first of which render an eclogue natural, and the last delightful.

If we could copy nature, it may be useful to take this idea along with us, that pastoral is an image of what they call the Golden Age. So that we are not to describe our shepherds as shepherds at this day really are, but as they may be conceived then to have been, when the best of men followed the employment. To carry this resemblance yet further, it would not be amiss to give these shepherds some skill in astronomy, as far as it may be useful to that sort of life. And an air of piety to the gods should shine through the poem, which so visibly appears in all the works of antiquity; and it ought to preserve some relish of the old way of writing: the connexion should be loose, the narrations and descriptions short, and the periods concise: yet it is not sufficient that the sentences only be brief; the whole eclogue should be so too: for we cannot suppose poetry in those days to have been the business of men, but their recreation at vacant hours.

But with respect to the present age, nothing more conduces to make these composures natural, than when some knowledge in rural affairs is discovered. This may be made to appear rather done by chance than on design, and sometimes is best shown by inference; lest by too much study to seem natural, we destroy that easy simplicity from whence arises the delight: for what is inviting in this sort of poetry proceeds not so much from the idea of that business, as the tranquillity of a country life.

We must therefore use some illusion to render a pastoral delightful; and this consists in exposing the best side only of a shepherd's life, and in concealing its miseries. Nor is it enough to introduce shepherds discoursing together in a natural way; but a regard must be had to the subject, that it contain some particular beauty in itself, and that it be different in every eclogue. Besides, in each of them a designed scene or prospect is to be presented to our view, which should likewise have its variety. This variety is obtained in a great



degree by frequent comparisons, drawn from the most agreeable objects of the country; by interrogations to things inanimate; by beautiful digressions, but those short; sometimes by insisting a little on circumstances; and, lastly, by elegant turns on the words, which render the numbers extremely sweet and pleasing. As for the numbers themselves, though they are properly of the heroic measure, they should be the smoothest, the most easy and flowing imaginable.

It is by rules like these that we ought to judge of pastoral. And since the instructions given for any art are to be delivered as that art is in perfection, they must of necessity be derived from those in whom it is acknowledged so to be. It is therefore from the practice of Theocritus and Virgil (the only undisputed authors of pastoral) that the critics have drawn the foregoing notions concerning it.

Theocritus excels all others in nature and simplicity. The subjects of his Idyllia are purely pastoral; but he is not so exact in his persons, having introduced reapers and fishermen as well as shepherds. He is apt to be too long in his descriptions, of which that of the cup in the first pastoral is a remarkable instance. In the manners he seems a little defective, for his swains are sometimes abusive and immodest, and perhaps too much inclining to rusticity; for instance, in his fourth and fifth Idyllia. But it is enough that all others learned their excellence from him, and that his dialect alone has a secret charm in it, which no other could ever attain.

Virgil, who copies Theocritus, refines upon his original: and in all points, where judgment is principally concerned, he is much superior to his master. Though some of his subjects are not pastoral in themselves, but only seem to be such, they have a wonderful variety in them, which the Greek was a stranger to. He exceeds him in regularity and brevity, and falls short of him in nothing but simplicity and propriety of style; the first of which perhaps was the fault of his age, and the last of his language.

Among the moderns, their success has been greatest who have most endeavoured to make these ancients their pattern.



The most considerable genius appears in the famous Tasso, and our Spenser. Tasso in his *Aminta* has as far excelled all the pastoral writers, as in his *Gierusalemme* he has outdone the epic poets of his country. But as his piece seems to have been the original of a new sort of poem, the pastoral comedy, in Italy, it cannot so well be considered as a copy of the ancients. Spenser's *Calendar*, in Mr. Dryden's opinion, is the most complete work of this kind which any nation has produced ever since the time of Virgil: not but that he may be thought imperfect in some few points. His eclogues are somewhat too long, if we compare them with the ancients. He is sometimes too allegorical, and treats of matters of religion in a pastoral style, as the Mantuan had done before him. He has employed the lyric measure, which is contrary to the practice of the old poets. His stanza is not still the same, nor always well chosen. This last may be the reason his expression is sometimes not concise enough; for the tetrastic has obliged him to extend his sense to the length of four lines, which would have been more closely confined in the couplet.

In the manners, thoughts, and characters, he comes near to Theocritus himself; though, notwithstanding all the care he has taken, he is certainly inferior in his dialect: for the Doric had its beauty and propriety in the time of Theocritus; it was used in part of Greece, and frequent in the mouths of many of the greatest persons: whereas the old English and country phrases of Spenser were either entirely obsolete, or spoken only by people of the lowest condition. As there is a difference betwixt simplicity and rusticity, so the expression of simple thoughts should be plain, but not clownish. The addition he has made of a calendar to his eclogues, is very beautiful; since by this, besides the general moral of innocence and simplicity, which is common to other authors of pastoral, he has one peculiar to himself; he compares human life to the several seasons, and at once exposes to his readers a view of the great and little worlds, in their various changes and aspects. Yet the scrupulous division of his pastorals into



months, has obliged him either to repeat the same description in other words, for three months together; or, when it was exhausted before, entirely to omit it: whence it comes to pass, that some of his eclogues (as the sixth, eighth, and tenth, for example) have nothing but their titles to distinguish them. The reason is evident, because the year has not that variety in it to furnish every month with a particular description, as it may every season.

Of the following eclogues I shall only say, that these four comprehend all the subjects which the critics upon Theocritus and Virgil will allow to be fit for pastoral: that they have as much variety of description, in respect of the several seasons, as Spenser's: that, in order to add to this variety, the several times of the day are observed, the rural employments in each season or time of day, and the rural scenes or places proper to such employments; not without some regard to the several ages of man, and the different passions proper to each age.

But after all, if they have any merit, it is to be attributed to some good old authors, whose works as I had leisure to study, so, I hope, I have not wanted care to imitate.

---



# PASTORALS.

---

## SPRING.

### THE FIRST PASTORAL; OR DAMON.

*To Sir William Trumbull.*

FIRST in these fields I try the sylvan strains,  
Nor blush to sport on Windsor's blissful plains:  
Fair Thames, flow gently from thy sacred spring,  
While on thy banks Sicilian muses sing;  
Let vernal airs through trembling osiers play,  
And Albion's cliffs resound the rural lay.

You that, too wise for pride, too good for power,  
Enjoy the glory to be great no more,  
And, carrying with you all the world can boast,  
To all the world illustriously are lost;  
O let my muse her slender reed inspire,  
Till in your native shades you tune the lyre.  
So when the nightingale to rest removes,  
The thrush may chant to the forsaken groves,  
But charm'd to silence, listens while she sings,  
And all the ærial audience clap their wings.

Soon as the flocks shook off the nightly dew,  
Two swains, whom love kept wakeful, and the muse,  
Pour'd o'er the whitening vale their fleecy care,  
Fresh as the morn, and as the season fair:  
The dawn now blushing on the mountain's side,  
Thus Daphnis spoke, and Strephon thus replied:

DAPHNIS.

Hear how the birds, on every bloomy spray,  
With joyous music wake the dawning day!



Why sit we mute, when early linnets sing,  
When warbling Philomel salutes the spring?  
Why sit we sad, when Phosphor shines so clear,  
And lavish nature paints the purple year?

STREPHON.

Sing then, and Damon shall attend the strain,  
While yon slow oxen turn the furrow'd plain.  
Here the bright crocus and blue violet glow;  
Here western winds on breathing roses blow.  
I'll stake yon lamb, that near the fountain plays,  
And from the brink his dancing shade surveys.

DAPHNIS.

And I this bowl, where wanton ivy twines,  
And swelling clusters bend the curling vines:  
Four figures rising from the work appear,  
The various seasons of the rolling year;  
And what is that which binds the radiant sky,  
Where twelve fair signs in beauteous order lie?

DAMON.

Then sing by turns, by turns the muses sing;  
Now hawthorns blossom, now the daisies spring,  
Now leaves the trees, and flowers adorn the ground;  
Begin, the vales shall every note rebound.

STREPHON.

Inspire me, Phœbus, in my Delia's praise,  
With Waller's strains, or Granville's moving lays!  
A milk-white bull shall at your altar stand,  
That threatens a fight, and spurns the rising sand.

DAPHNIS.

O Love! for Sylvia let me gain the prize,  
And make my tongue victorious as her eyes;  
No lambs or sheep for victims I'll impart,  
Thy victim, Love, shall be the shepherd's heart.

STREPHON.

Me gentle Delia beckons from the plain,  
Then, hid in shades, eludes her eager swain;



But feigns a laugh, to see me search around,  
And by that laugh the willing fair is found.

DAPHNIS.

The sprightly Sylvia trips along the green;  
She runs, but hopes she does not run unseen:  
While a kind glance at her pursuer flies.  
How much at variance are her feet and eyes!

STREPHON.

O'er golden sands let rich Pactolus flow,  
And trees weep amber on the banks of Po;  
Blest Thames's shores the brightest beauties yield.  
Feed here my lambs, I'll seek no distant field.

DAPHNIS.

Celestial Venus haunts Idalia's groves;  
Diana Cynthus, Ceres Hybla loves;  
If Windsor shades delight the matchless maid,  
Cynthus and Hybla yield to Windsor-shade.

STREPHON.

All Nature mourns, the skies relent in showers,  
Hush'd are the birds, and closed the drooping flowers;  
If Delia smile, the flowers begin to spring,  
The skies to brighten, and the birds to sing.

DAPHNIS.

All Nature laughs, the groves are fresh and fair,  
The sun's mild lustre warms the vital air;  
If Sylvia smile, new glories gild the shore,  
And vanquish'd Nature seems to charm no more.

STREPHON.

In spring the fields, in autumn hills I love,  
At morn the plains, at noon the shady grove,  
But Delia always; absent from her sight,  
Nor plains at morn, nor groves at noon delight.

DAPHNIS.

Sylvia's like autumn ripe, yet mild as May,  
More bright than noon, yet fresh as early day:  
E'en spring displeases, when she shines not here,  
But, bless'd with her, 'tis spring throughout the year.



STREPHON.

Say, Daphnis, say, in what glad soil appears,  
 A wondrous tree that sacred monarchs bears:  
 Tell me but this, and I'll disclaim the prize,  
 And give the conquest to thy Sylvia's eyes.

DAPHNIS.

Nay, tell me first, in what more happy fields  
 The thistle springs, to which the lily yields:  
 And then a nobler prize I will resign;  
 For Sylvia, charming Sylvia, shall be thine.

DAMON.

Cease to contend; for, Daphnis, I decree  
 The bowl to Strephon, and the lamb to thee.  
 Blest swains, whose nymphs in every grace excel;  
 Blest nymphs, whose swains those graces sing so well!  
 Now rise and haste to yonder woodbine bowers,  
 A soft retreat from sudden vernal showers!  
 The turf with rural dainties shall be crown'd.  
 While opening blooms diffuse their sweets around.  
 For see! the gathering flocks to shelter tend,  
 And from the Pleiads fruitful showers descend.

---

## SUMMER.

THE SECOND PASTORAL; OR ALEXIS.

*To Dr. Garth.*

A SHEPHERD'S boy (he seeks no better name)  
 Led forth his flocks along the silver Thame,  
 Where dancing sun-beams on the waters play'd,  
 And verdant alders form'd a quivering shade.  
 Soft as he mourn'd, the streams forgot to flow,  
 The flocks around a dumb compassion show,  
 The Naiads wept in every watery bower,  
 And Jove consented in a silent shower.  
 Accept, O Garth, the muse's early lays,  
 That adds this wreath of ivy to thy bays;



Hear what from love unpractised hearts endure,  
From love, the sole disease thou canst not cure.  
Ye shady beeches, and ye cooling streams,  
Defence from Phœbus', not from Cupid's beams,  
To you I mourn; nor to the deaf I sing,  
The woods shall answer, and their echo ring.  
The hills and rocks attend my doleful lay:  
Why art thou prouder and more hard than they?  
The bleating sheep with my complaints agree,  
They parch'd with heat, and I inflamed by thee.  
The sultry Sirius burns the thirsty plains,  
While in thy heart eternal winter reigns.

Where stray ye, muses, in what lawn or grove,  
While your Alexis pines in hopeless love?  
In those fair fields where sacred Isis glides,  
Or else where Cam his winding vales divides?  
As in the crystal spring I view my face,  
Fresh rising blushes paint the watery glass;  
But since those graces please thine eyes no more,  
I shun the fountains which I sought before.  
Once I was skill'd in every herb that grew,  
And every plant that drinks the morning dew;  
Ah, wretched shepherd, what avails thy art,  
To cure thy lambs, but not to heal thy heart!

Let other swains attend the rural care,  
Feed fairer flocks, or richer fleeces bear:  
But nigh yon mountain let me tune my lays,  
Embrace my love, and bind my brows with bays.  
That flute is mine which Colin's tuneful breath  
Inspired when living, and bequeathed in death;  
He said: "Alexis, take this pipe, the same  
That taught the groves my Rosalinda's name."  
But now the reed shall hang on yonder tree,  
For ever silent, since despised by thee.  
O! were I made by some transforming power  
The captive bird that sings within thy bower!



Then might my voice thy listening ears employ,  
And I those kisses he receives enjoy.

And yet my numbers please the rural throng,  
Rough satyrs dance, and Pan applauds the song:  
The nymphs, forsaking every cave and spring,  
Their early fruit and milk-white turtles bring!  
Each amorous nymph prefers her gifts in vain,  
On you their gifts are all bestow'd again:  
For you the swains the fairest flowers design,  
And in one garland all their beauties join;  
Accept the wreath which you deserve alone,  
In whom all beauties are comprised in one.

See what delights in sylvan scenes appear!  
Descending gods have found Elysium here.  
In woods bright Venus with Adonis stray'd,  
And chaste Diana haunts the forest shade.  
Come, lovely nymph, and bless the silent hours,  
When swains from shearing seek their nightly bowers:  
When weary reapers quit the sultry field,  
And crown'd with corn their thanks to Ceres yield.  
This harmless grove no lurking viper hides,  
But in my breast the serpent Love abides.  
Here bees from blossoms sip the rosy dew,  
But your Alexis knows no sweets but you.  
O deign to visit our forsaken seats,  
The mossy fountains, and the green retreats!  
Where'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade:  
Trees, where you sit, shall crowd into a shade:  
Where'er you tread, the blushing flowers shall rise,  
And all things flourish where you turn your eyes.  
Oh! how I long with you to pass my days,  
Invoke the muses, and resound your praise!  
Your praise the birds shall chant in every grove,  
And winds shall waft it to the powers above.  
But would you sing, and rival Orpheus' strain,  
The wondering forests soon should dance again,



The moving mountains hear the powerful call,  
And headlong streams hang listening in their fall!

But see, the shepherds shun the noon-day heat,  
The lowing herds to murmuring brooks retreat,  
To closer shades the panting flocks remove;  
Ye gods! and is there no relief for love?  
But soon the sun with milder rays descends  
To the cool ocean, where his journey ends:  
On me Love's fiercer flames for ever prey,  
By night he scorches, as he burns by day.

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### AUTUMN.

THE THIRD PASTORAL; OR HYLAS AND ÆGON.

*To Mr. Wycherley.*

BENEATH the shade a spreading beech displays,  
Hylas and Ægon sang their rural lays:  
This mourn'd a faithless, that an absent love;  
And Delia's name and Doris' fill'd the grove.  
Ye Mantuan nymphs, your sacred succours bring;  
Hylas and Ægon's rural lays I sing.

Thou, whom the Nine with Plautus' wit inspire,  
The art of Terence and Menander's fire;  
Whose sense instructs us, and whose humour charms,  
Whose judgment sways us, and whose spirit warms!  
Oh, skill'd in nature! see the hearts of swains,  
Their artless passions, and their tender pains.

Now setting Phœbus shone serenely bright,  
And fleecy clouds were streak'd with purple light;  
When tuneful Hylas, with melodious moan,  
Taught rocks to weep, and made the mountains groan.

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs away!  
To Delia's ear the tender notes convey.  
As some sad turtle his lost love deplores,  
And with deep murmurs fills the sounding shores;



Thus, far from Delia, to the winds I mourn,  
Alike unheard, unpitied, and forlorn.

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs along!  
For her, the feather'd quires neglect their song:  
For her, the limes their pleasing shades deny:  
For her, the lilies hang their heads and die.  
Ye flowers that droop, forsaken by the spring,  
Ye birds that, left by summer, cease to sing,  
Ye trees that fade when autumn heats remove,  
Say, is not absence death to those who love?

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs away!  
Cursed be the fields that cause my Delia's stay;  
Fade every blossom, wither every tree,  
Die every flower, and perish all, but she!  
What have I said? where'er my Delia flies,  
Let spring attend, and sudden flowers arise!  
Let opening roses knotted oaks adorn,  
And liquid amber drop from every thorn.

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs along!  
The birds shall cease to tune their evening song,  
The winds to breathe, the waving woods to move,  
And streams to murmur, ere I cease to love,  
Not bubbling fountains to the thirsty swain,  
Not balmy sleep to labourers faint with pain,  
Not showers to larks, or sunshine to the bee,  
Are half so charming as thy sight to me.

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs away!  
Come, Delia, come; ah, why this long delay?  
Through rocks and caves the name of Delia sounds;  
Delia, each cave and echoing rock rebounds.  
Ye powers, what pleasing frenzy soothes my mind!  
Do lovers dream, or is my Delia kind?  
She comes, my Delia comes! Now cease my lay,  
And cease, ye gales, to bear my sighs away!

Next Ægon sang, while Windsor groves admired:  
Rehearse, ye muses, what yourselves inspired.



Resound, ye hills, resound my mournful strain!  
 Of perjured Doris, dying I complain;  
 Here where the mountains, lessening as they rise,  
 Lose the low vales, and steal into the skies;  
 While labouring oxen, spent with toil and heat,  
 In their loose traces from the field retreat;  
 While curling smokes from village-tops are seen,  
 And the fleet shades glide o'er the dusky green.

Resound, ye hills, resound my mornful lay!  
 Beneath yon poplar oft we pass'd the day:  
 Oft on the rind I carved her amorous vows,  
 While she with garlands hung the bending boughs;  
 The garlands fade, the vows are worn away:  
 So dies her love, and so my hopes decay.

Resound, ye hills, resound my mournful strain!  
 Now bright Arcturus glads the teeming grain;  
 Now golden fruits on loaded branches shine,  
 And grateful clusters swell with floods of wine;  
 Now blushing berries paint the yellow grove.  
 Just gods! shall all things yield returns but love?

Resound, ye hills, resound my mornful lay!  
 The shepherds cry, "Thy flocks are left a prey."  
 Ah! what avails it me the flocks to keep,  
 Who lost my heart while I preserved my sheep?  
 Pan came, and ask'd, what magic caused my smart,  
 Or what ill eyes malignant glances dart?  
 What eyes but hers, alas, have power to move!  
 And is there magic but what dwells in love?

Resound, ye hills, resound my mournful strains!  
 I'll fly from shepherds, flocks, and flowery plains.  
 From shepherds, flocks, and plains, I may remove,  
 Forsake mankind, and all the world, but love!  
 I know thee, Love: on foreign mountains bred,  
 Wolves gave thee suck, and savage tigers fed;  
 Thou wert from Etna's burning entrails torn,  
 Got by fierce whirlwinds, and in thunder born.



Resound, ye hills, resound my mournful lay!  
 Farewell, ye woods; adieu, the light of day!  
 One leap from yonder cliff shall end my pains.  
 No more, ye hills, no more resound my strains!

Thus sang the shepherds till the approach of night,  
 The skies yet blushing with departed light,  
 When falling dew with spangles deck the glade,  
 And the low sun had lengthen'd every shade.

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## WINTER.

### THE FOURTH PASTORAL; OR DAPHNE.

*To the Memory of Mrs. Tempest.*

LYCIDAS.

THYRSIS, the music of that murmuring spring  
 Is not so mournful as the strains you sing;  
 Nor rivers winding through the vales below,  
 So sweetly warble, or so smoothly flow.  
 Now sleeping flocks on their soft fleeces lie,  
 The moon, serene in glory, mounts the sky,  
 While silent birds forget their tuneful lays.  
 O sing of Daphne's fate, and Daphne's praise!

THYRSIS.

Behold the groves that shine with silver frost,  
 Their beauty wither'd, and their verdure lost.  
 Here shall I try the sweet Alexis' strain,  
 That call'd the listening Dryads to the plain?  
 Thames heard the numbers as he flow'd along.  
 And bade his willows learn the moving song.

LYCIDAS.

So may kind rains their vital moisture yield,  
 And swell the future harvest of the field.  
 Begin; this charge the dying Daphne gave,  
 And said, "Ye shepherds, sing around my grave!"  
 Sing, while beside the shaded tomb I mourn,  
 And with fresh bays her rural shrine adorn.



## THYRSIS.

Ye gentle muses, leave your crystal spring,  
Let nymphs and sylvans cypress garlands bring:  
Ye weeping Loves, the stream with myrtles hide,  
And break your bows as when Adonis died;  
And with your golden darts, now useless grown,  
Inscribe a verse on this relenting stone:  
“Let Nature change, let heaven and earth deplore;  
Fair Daphne’s dead, and love is now no more!”

’T is done, and Nature’s various charms decay:  
See gloomy clouds obscure the cheerful day!  
Now hung with pearls the dropping trees appear,  
Their faded honours scatter’d on her bier.  
See where, on earth, the flowery glories lie;  
With her they flourish’d, and with her they die.  
Ah! what avail the beauties nature wore?  
Fair Daphne’s dead, and beauty is no more!

For her the flocks refuse their verdant food;  
The thirsty heifers shun the gliding flood:  
The silver swans her hapless fate bemoan,  
In notes more sad than when they sing their own;  
In hollow caves sweet Echo silent lies,  
Silent, or only to her name replies;  
Her name with pleasure once she taught the shore:  
Now Daphne’s dead, and pleasure is no more!

No grateful dews descend from evening skies,  
Nor morning odours from the flowers arise;  
No rich perfumes refresh the fruitful field,  
Nor fragrant herbs their native incense yield.  
The balmy Zephyrs, silent since her death,  
Lament the ceasing of a sweeter breath;  
The industrious bees neglect the golden store:  
Fair Daphne’s dead, and sweetness is no more!

No more the mounting larks, while Daphne sings,  
Shall, listening in mid air, suspend their wings;  
No more the birds shall imitate her lays,  
Or, hush’d with wonder, hearken from the sprays:



No more the streams their murmurs shall forbear,  
 A sweeter music than their own to hear;  
 But tell the reeds, and tell the vocal shore,  
 Fair Daphne's dead, and music is no more!

Her fate is whisper'd by the gentle breeze,  
 And told in sighs to all the trembling trees;  
 The trembling trees, in every plain and wood,  
 Her fate remurmur to the silver flood;  
 The silver flood, so lately calm, appears  
 Swell'd with new passion, and o'erflows with tears;  
 The winds, and trees, and floods, her death deplore.  
 Daphne our grief, our glory now no more!

But see! where Daphne wondering mounts on high,  
 Above the clouds, above the starry sky!  
 Eternal beauties grace the shining scene,  
 Fields ever fresh, and groves for ever green!  
 There, while you rest in amaranthine bowers,  
 Or from those meads select unfading flowers,  
 Behold us kindly, who your name implore,  
 Daphne, our goddess, and our grief no more!

LYCIDAS.

How all things listen, while thy muse complains!  
 Such silence waits on Philomela's strains,  
 In some still evening, when the whispering breeze  
 Pants on the leaves, and dies upon the trees.  
 To thee, bright goddess, oft a lamb shall bleed,  
 If teeming ewes increase my fleecy breed.  
 While plants their shade, or flowers their odours give,  
 Thy name, thy honour, and thy praise, shall live!

THYRSIS.

But see, Orion sheds unwholesome dews.  
 Arise, the pines a noxious shade diffuse;  
 Sharp Boreas blows, and Nature feels decay,  
 Time conquers all, and we must Time obey.  
 Adieu, ye vales, ye mountains, streams, and groves;  
 Adieu, ye shepherds' rural lays and loves;  
 Adieu, my flocks; farewell, ye sylvan crew;  
 Daphne, farewell! and all the world, adieu!

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# MESSIAH.

*A sacred Eclogue, in Imitation of Virgils' Pollio.*

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

In reading several passages of the prophet Isaiah, which foretell the coming of Christ, and the felicities attending it, I could not but observe a remarkable parity between many of the thoughts, and those in the Pollio of Virgil. This will not seem surprising, when we reflect, that the eclogue was taken from a Sibylline prophecy on the same subject. One may judge that Virgil did not copy it line for line; but selected such ideas as best agreed with the nature of pastoral poetry, and disposed them in that manner which served most to beautify his piece. I have endeavoured the same in this imitation of him, though without admitting any thing of my own; since it was written with this particular view, that the reader, by comparing the several thoughts, might see how far the images and descriptions of the prophet are superior to those of the poet. But as I fear I have prejudiced them by my management, I shall subjoin the passages of Isaiah, and those of Virgil, under the same disadvantage of a literal translation.

YE nymphs of Solyma! begin the song:  
To heavenly themes sublimer strains belong.  
Themossy fountains and the sylvan shades,  
Thedreams of Pindus and the Aonian maids,  
Delight no more — O Thou my voice inspire  
Who touch'd Isaiah's hallow'd lips with fire!

5

Rapt into future times, the bard begun:  
A Virgin shall conceive, a Virgin bear a Son!

## IMITATIONS.

Ver. 8. A Virgin shall conceive — All crimes shall cease,  
&c.] Virg. Ecl. iv. ver. 6.

Jam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna,  
Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto.  
Te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,



From Jesse's (*a*) root behold a branch arise,  
 Whose sacred flower with fragrance fills the skies:  
 The æthereal spirit o'er its leaves shall move, 11  
 And on its top descends the mystic dove.  
 Ye heavens! (*b*) from high the dewy nectar pour,  
 And in soft silence shed the kindly shower!  
 The sick (*c*) and weak the healing plant shall aid,  
 From storm a shelter, and from heat a shade. 16  
 All crimes shall cease, and ancient frauds shall fail;  
 Returning Justice (*d*) lift aloft her scale;  
 Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,  
 And white-robed Innocence from heaven descend. 20  
 Swift fly the years, and rise the expected morn!  
 Oh spring to light, auspicious Babe, be born!  
 See, Nature hastes her earliest wreaths to bring,  
 With all the incense of the breathing spring:

## IMITATIONS.

Irrita perpetuâ solvent formidine terras —  
 Pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem.

“Now the virgin returns, now the kingdom of Saturn returns, now a new progeny is sent down from high heaven. By means of thee, whatever reliques of our crimes remain, shall be wiped away, and free the world from perpetual fears. He shall govern the earth in peace, with the virtues of his father.”

Isaiah, ch. vii. ver. 14. — “Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son. Chap. ix. ver. 6, 7. — Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given; the Prince of Peace: of the increase of his government, and of his peace, there shall be no end: upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order and to establish it, with judgement and with justice, for ever and ever.”

Ver. 23. See, Nature hastes, &c.] Virg. Ecl. iv. ver. 18.

At tibi prima, puer, nullo munuscula cultu,  
 Errantes hederas passim cum baccare tellus,

(*a*) Isa. xi. ver. 1.

(*c*) Ch. xxv. ver. 4

(*b*) Ch. xlv. ver. 8.

(*d*) Ch. ix. ver. 7.



See lofty Lebanon (*e*) his head advance, 25  
 See nodding forests on the mountains dance:  
 See spicy clouds from lowly Saron rise,  
 And Carmel's flowery top perfume the skies!  
 Hark! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers!  
 Prepare the way! (*f*) A God, a God appears! 30

## IMITATIONS.

Mixtaque ridenti colocasia fundet acantho —  
 Ipsa tibi blandos fundent cunabula flores.

“For thee, O child, shall the earth, without being tilled, produce her early offerings; winding ivy, mixed with baccar, and colocassia with smiling acanthus. Thy cradle shall pour forth pleasing flowers about thee.”

Isaiah, ch. xxxv. ver. 1. — “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.” Ch. lx. ver. 13. — “The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of thy sanctuary.”

Ver. 29. Hark! a glad voice, &c.] Virg. Ecl. iv. ver. 46.

Aggredere ô magnos (aderit jam tempus) honores,  
 Cara Deûm soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum!

Ecl. v. ver. 62.

Ipsi lætitiâ voces ad sidera jactant  
 Intonsi montes, ipsæ jam carmina rupes,  
 Ipsa sonant arbusta, Deus, Deus ille, Menalca!

“O come and receive the mighty honours: the time draws nigh, O beloved offspring of the gods! O great increase of Jove! The uncultivated mountains send shouts of joy to the stars; the very rocks sing in verse; the very shrubs cry out, A God, a God!”

Isaiah, ch. xl. ver. 3, 4. — “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord! make straight in the desert a highway for our God! Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be

(*e*) Ch. xxxv. ver. 2.

(*f*) Ch. xl. ver. 3, 4.



A God, a God! the vocal hills reply;  
 The rocks proclaim the approaching Deity.  
 Lo, earth receives him from the bending skies!  
 Sink down, ye mountains; and ye valleys, rise!  
 With heads declined, ye cedars, homage pay; 35  
 Be smooth, ye rocks; ye rapid floods, give way.  
 The Saviour comes! by ancient bards foretold:  
 Hear him, ye deaf; and all ye blind, behold!  
 He from thick films shall purge the visual ray,  
 And on the sightless eye-ball pour the day: 40  
 'T is he the obstructed paths of sound shall clear,  
 And bid new music charm the unfolding ear:  
 The dumb (*g*) shall sing, the lame his crutch forego,  
 And leap exulting, like the bounding roe.  
 No sigh, no murmur, the wide world shall hear; 45  
 From every face he wipes off every tear.  
 In adamantine (*h*) chains shall death be bound,  
 And hell's grim tyrant feel the eternal wound.  
 As the good shepherd (*i*) tends his fleecy care,  
 Seeks freshest pasture, and the purest air; 50  
 Explores the lost, the wandering sheep directs,  
 By day o'ersees them, and by night protects;  
 The tender lambs he raises in his arms,  
 Feeds from his hand, and in his bosom warms:  
 Thus shall mankind his guardian care engage, 55  
 The promised father (*j*) of the future age.  
 No more shall nation (*k*) against nation rise,  
 Nor ardent warriors meet with hateful eyes,

## IMITATIONS.

made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain." Ch. xlv. ver. 23. — "Break forth into singing, ye mountains; O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Israel."

(*g*) Ch. xliii. ver. 18. Ch. xxxv. ver. 5, 6.

(*h*) Ch. xxv. ver. 8.

(*i*) Ch. xl. ver. 11.

(*j*) Ch. ix. ver. 6.

(*k*) Ch. ii. ver. 4.



Nor fields with gleaming steel be cover'd o'er,  
 The brazen trumpets kindle rage no more; 60  
 But useless lances into scythes shall bend,  
 And the broad falchion in a plough-share end.  
 Then palaces shall rise; the joyful son (*l*)  
 Shall finish what his short-lived sire begun;  
 Their vines a shadow to their race shall yield, 65  
 And the same hand that sow'd, shall reap the field.  
 The swain in barren deserts (*m*) with surprise  
 Sees lilies spring, and sudden verdure rise;  
 And starts, amidst the thirsty wilds to hear  
 New falls of water murmuring in his ear. 70  
 On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes,  
 The green reed trembles, and the bulrush nods.  
 Waste sandy valleys (*n*), once perplex'd with thorn,  
 The spiry fir and shapely box adorn:  
 To leafless shrubs the flowery palms succeed, 75  
 And odorous myrtle to the noisome weed.

## IMITATIONS.

Ver. 67. The swain in barren deserts] Virg. Ecl. iv. ver. 28.

Molli paulatim flavescet campus aristâ,  
 Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva,  
 Et duræ quercus sudabunt roscida mella.

“The fields shall grow yellow with ripened ears, and the red grape shall hang upon the wild brambles, and the hard oaks shall distil honey like dew.”

Isaiah, ch. xxxv. ver. 7. — “The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitations where dragons lay, shall be grass, and reeds, and rushes.” Ch. lv. ver. 13. — “Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-tree.”

(*l*) Ch. lxxv. ver. 21, 22.

(*m*) Ch. xxxv. ver. 1, 7.

(*n*) Ch. xli. ver. 19. and ch. lv. ver. 13.



The lambs (*o*) with wolves shall graze the verdant mead,  
 And boys in flowery bands the tiger lead.  
 The steer and lion at one crib shall meet,  
 And harmless serpents (*p*) lick the pilgrim's feet. 80  
 The smiling infant in his hand shall take  
 The crested basilisk and speckled snake,  
 Pleased, the green lustre of the scales survey,  
 And with their forky tongue shall innocently play.  
 Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem (*q*), rise!  
 Exalt thy towery head, and lift thy eyes! 86

## IMITATIONS.

Ver. 77. The lambs with wolves, &c.] Virg. Ecl. iv. ver. 21.

Ipsæ lacte domum referent distenta capellæ  
 Ubera, nec magnos metuent armenta leones —  
 Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni  
 Occidet —

“The goats shall bear to the fold their udders distended with milk; nor shall the herds be afraid of the greatest lions. The serpent shall die, and the herb that conceals poison shall die.”

Isaiah, ch. xi. ver. 6, &c. “The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the den of the cockatrice.”

Ver. 85. Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem, rise!] The thoughts of Isaiah, which compose the latter part of the poem, are wonderfully elevated, and much above those general exclamations of Virgil, which make the loftiest parts of his Pollio.

(*o*) Ch. xi. ver. 6, 7, 8.

(*p*) Ch. lxxv. ver. 25.

(*q*) Ch. lx. ver. 1.



See a long race (*r*) thy spacious courts adorn;  
 See future sons, and daughters yet unborn,  
 In crowding ranks on every side arise,  
 Demanding life, impatient for the skies! 90  
 See barbarous nations (*s*) at thy gates attend,  
 Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend;  
 See thy bright altars throng'd with prostrate kings,  
 And heap'd with products of Sabea (*t*) springs!  
 For thee Idume's spicy forests blow, 95  
 And seeds of gold in Ophir's mountains glow.  
 See heaven its sparkling portals wide display,  
 And break upon thee in a flood of day!  
 No more the rising sun (*u*) shall gild the morn,  
 Nor evening Cynthia fill her silver horn; 100  
 But lost, dissolved in thy superior rays,  
 One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze  
 O'erflow thy courts: the Light himself shall shine  
 Reveal'd, and God's eternal day be thine!  
 The seas (*v*) shall waste, the skies in smoke decay,  
 Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away; 106  
 But fix'd his word, his saving power remains;  
 Thy realm for ever lasts, thy own Messiah reigns!

## IMITATIONS.

Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo!  
 — toto surget gens aurea mundo!  
 — Incipient magni procedere menses!  
 Aspice, venturo lætentur ut omnia sæclo! &c.

The reader needs only to turn to the passages of Isaiah, here cited.

(*r*) Ch. lx. ver. 4

(*s*) Ch. lx. ver. 3.

(*t*) Ch. lx. ver. 6.

(*u*) Ch. lx. ver. 19, 20.

(*v*) Ch. li. ver. 6. and ch. liv. ver. 10.



## WINDSOR-FOREST.

*To the Right Hon. George Lord Lansdowne.*

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Non injussa cano: te nostræ, Vare, myricæ.  
Te nemus omne canet; nec Phœbo gratior ulla est,  
Quam sibi quæ Vari præscripsit pagina nomen.

---

VIRG.

THY forest, Windsor! and thy green retreats,  
At once the Monarch's and the Muses' seats,  
Invite my lays. Be present, sylvan maids!  
Unlock your springs, and open all your shades.  
Granville commands; your aid, O muses, bring!  
What muse for Granville can refuse to sing?

The groves of Eden, vanish'd now so long,  
Live in description, and look green in song;  
These, were my breast inspir'd with equal flame,  
Like them in beauty, should be like in fame.  
Here hills and vales, the woodland and the plain,  
Here earth and water seem to strive again;  
Not chaos-like together crush'd and bruised,  
But, as the world, harmoniously confused;  
Where order in variety we see,  
And where, though all things differ, all agree.  
Here waving groves a chequer'd scene display,  
And part admit, and part exclude the day;  
As some coy nymph her lover's warm address  
Nor quite indulges, nor can quite repress.  
There, interspersed in lawns and opening glades,  
Thin trees arise that shun each other's shades.  
Here in full light the russet plains extend:  
There, wrapt in clouds, the blueish hills ascend.



E'en the wild heath displays her purple dyes,  
And 'midst the desert, fruitful fields arise,  
That, crown'd with tufted trees and springing corn,  
Like verdant isles the sable waste adorn.  
Let India boast her plants, nor envy we  
The weeping amber, or the balmy tree,  
While by our oaks the precious loads are borne,  
And realms commanded which those trees adorn.  
Not proud Olympus yields a nobler sight,  
Though gods assembled grace his towering height,  
Than what more humble mountains offer here,  
Where, in their blessings, all those gods appear.  
See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pomona crown'd,  
Here blushing Flora paints the enamel'd ground,  
Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,  
And nodding tempt the joyful reaper's hand;  
Rich industry sits smiling on the plains,  
And peace and plenty tell, a Stuart reigns.

Not thus the land appear'd in ages past,  
A dreary desert, and a gloomy waste,  
To savage beasts and savage laws a prey,  
And kings more furious and severe than they;  
Who claim'd the skies, dispeopled air and floods,  
The lonely lords of empty wilds and woods:  
Cities laid waste, they storm'd the dens and caves  
(For wiser brutes were backward to be slaves).  
What could be free, when lawless beasts obey'd,  
And e'en the elements a tyrant sway'd?  
In vain kind seasons swell'd the teeming grain;  
Soft showers distill'd, and suns grew warm in vain;  
The swain with tears his frustrate labour yields,  
And, famish'd, dies amidst his ripen'd fields.  
What wonder then, a beast or subject slain  
Were equal crimes in a despotic reign?  
Both doom'd alike for sportive tyrants bled,  
But, while the subject starved, the beast was fed.



Proud Nimrod first the bloody chase began,  
A mighty hunter, and his prey was man:  
Our haughty Norman boasts that barbarous name,  
And makes his trembling slaves the royal game.  
The fields are ravish'd from the industrious swains,  
From men their cities, and from gods their fanes:  
The level'd towns with weeds lie cover'd o'er;  
The hollow winds through naked temples roar;  
Round broken columns clasping ivy twined;  
O'er heaps of ruin stalk'd the stately hind;  
The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,  
And savage howlings fill the sacred quires.  
Awed by his nobles, by his commons curst,  
The oppressor ruled tyrannic where he durst,  
Stretch'd o'er the poor and church his iron rod,  
And served alike his vassals and his God.  
Whom e'en the Saxon spared, and bloody Dane,  
The wanton victims of his sport remain.  
But see, the man who spacious regions gave  
A waste for beasts, himself denied a grave!  
Stretch'd on the lawn his second hope survey,  
At once the chaser, and at once the prey:  
Lo Rufus, tugging at the deadly dart,  
Bleeds in the forest like a wounded hart.  
Succeeding monarchs heard the subjects' cries,  
Nor saw displeased the peaceful cottage rise.  
Then gathering flocks on unknown mountains fed,  
O'er sandy wilds where yellow harvests spread,  
The forests wonder'd at the unusual grain,  
And secret transports touch'd the conscious swain.  
Fair Liberty, Britannia's goddess, rears  
Her cheerful head, and leads the golden years.

Ye vigorous swains! while youth ferments your blood,  
And purer spirits swell the sprightly flood,  
Now range the hills, the gameful woods beset,  
Wind the shrill horn, or spread the waving net.



When milder autumn summer's heat succeeds,  
And in the new-shorn field the partridge feeds;  
Before his lord the ready spaniel bounds,  
Panting with hope, he tries the furrow'd grounds;  
But when the tainted gales the game betray,  
Couch'd close he lies, and meditates the prey:  
Secure they trust the unfaithful field beset,  
Till hovering o'er them sweeps the swelling net.  
Thus (if small things we may with great compare)  
When Albion sends her eager sons to war,  
Some thoughtless town, with ease and plenty bless'd,  
Near and more near, the closing lines invest;  
Sudden they seize the amazed, defenceless prize,  
And high in air Britannia's standard flies.

See! from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,  
And mounts exulting on triumphant wings:  
Short is his joy, he feels the fiery wound,  
Flutters in blood, and panting beats the ground.  
Ah! what avail his glossy, varying dyes,  
His purple crest, and scarlet circled eyes,  
The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,  
His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold?

Nor yet, when moist Arcturus clouds the sky,  
The woods and fields their pleasing toils deny.  
To plains with well-breathed beagles we repair,  
And trace the mazes of the circling hare  
(Beasts, urged by us, their fellow-beasts pursue,  
And learn of man each other to undo):  
With slaughtering guns the unwearied fowler roves,  
When frosts have whiten'd all the naked groves;  
Where doves in flocks the leafless trees o'ershade,  
And lonely woodcocks haunt the watery glade.  
He lifts the tube, and levels with his eye;  
Straight a short thunder breaks the frozen sky:  
Oft, as in airy rings they skim the heath,  
The clamorous lapwings feel the leaden death;



Oft, as the mounting larks their notes prepare,  
They fall, and leave their little lives in air.

In genial spring, beneath the quivering shade,  
Where cooling vapours breathe along the mead,  
The patient fisher takes his silent stand,  
Intent, his angle trembling in his hand:  
With looks unmoved, he hopes the scaly breed,  
And eyes the dancing cork and bending reed.  
Our plenteous streams a various race supply,  
The bright-eyed perch with fins of Tyrian dye,  
The silver eel, in shining volumes roll'd,  
The yellow carp, in scales bedropp'd with gold,  
Swift trouts, diversified with crimson stains,  
And pikes, the tyrants of the watery plains.

Now Cancer glows with Phœbus' fiery car:  
The youth rush eager to the sylvan war,  
Swarm o'er the lawns, the forest walks surround,  
Rouse the fleet hart, and cheer the opening hound.  
The impatient courser pants in every vein,  
And, pawing, seems to beat the distant plain:  
Hills, vales, and floods, appear already cross'd,  
And, ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost.  
See the bold youth strain up the threatening steep,  
Rush through the thickets, down the valleys sweep,  
Hang o'er their coursers' heads with eager speed,  
And earth rolls back beneath the flying steed.  
Let old Arcadia boast her ample plain,  
The immortal huntress, and her virgin-train;  
Nor envy, Windsor! since thy shades have seen  
As bright a goddess, and as chaste a queen;  
Whose care, like hers, protects the sylvan reign,  
The earth's fair light, and empress of the main.

Here, too, 't is sung, of old, Diana stray'd,  
And Cynthus' top forsook for Windsor shade;  
Here was she seen o'er airy wastes to rove,  
Seek the clear spring, or haunt the pathless grove;



Here, arm'd with silver bows, in early dawn,  
Her buskin'd virgins traced the dewy lawn.

Above the rest a rural nymph was famed,  
Thy offspring, Thames! the fair Lodona named  
(Lodona's fate, in long oblivion cast,  
The muse shall sing, and what she sings shall last).  
Scarce could the goddess from her nymph be known,  
But by the crescent, and the golden zone.  
She scorn'd the praise of beauty, and the care;  
A belt her waist, a fillet binds her hair;  
A painted quiver on her shoulder sounds,  
And with her dart the flying deer she wounds.  
It chanced, as, eager of the chase, the maid  
Beyond the forest's verdant limits stray'd,  
Pan saw and loved, and burning with desire  
Pursued her flight; her flight increased his fire.  
Not half so swift the trembling doves can fly,  
When the fierce eagle cleaves the liquid sky;  
Not half so swiftly the fierce eagle moves,  
When through the clouds he drives the trembling doves;  
As from the god she flew with furious pace,  
Or as the god, more furious, urged the chase.  
Now fainting, sinking, pale, the nymph appears;  
Now close behind, his sounding steps she hears:  
And now his shadow reach'd her as she run,  
His shadow lengthen'd by the setting sun;  
And now his shorter breath, with sultry air,  
Pants on her neck, and fans her parting hair.  
In vain on father Thames she calls for aid,  
Nor could Diana help her injured maid.  
Faint, breathless, thus she pray'd, nor pray'd in vain;  
"Ah, Cynthia! ah — though banish'd from thy train,  
Let me, O let me, to the shades repair,  
My native shades! there weep, and murmur there!"  
She said, and, melting as in tears she lay,  
In a soft silver stream dissolved away.



The silver stream her virgin coldness keeps,  
For ever murmurs, and for ever weeps;  
Still bears the name the helpless virgin bore,  
And bathes the forest where she ranged before.  
In her chaste current oft the goddess laves,  
And with celestial tears augments the waves.  
Oft in her glass the musing shepherd spies  
The headlong mountains and the downward skies,  
The watery landscape of the pendent woods,  
And absent trees that tremble in the floods;  
In the clear azure gleam the flocks are seen,  
And floating forests paint the waves with green;  
Through the fair scene roll slow the lingering streams,  
Then foaming pour along, and rush into the Thames.

Thou, too, great father of the British floods!  
With joyful pride survey'st our lofty woods;  
Where towering oaks their growing honours rear,  
And future navies on thy shores appear.  
Not Neptune's self from all her streams receives  
A wealthier tribute than to thine he gives.  
No seas so rich, so gay no banks appear,  
No lake so gentle, and no spring so clear.  
Nor Po so swells the fabling poet's lays,  
While led along the skies his current strays,  
As thine, which visits Windsor's famed abodes,  
To grace the mansion of our earthly gods;  
Nor all his stars above a lustre show,  
Like the bright beauties on thy banks below;  
Where Jove, subdued by mortal passion still,  
Might change Olympus for a nobler hill.

Happy the man whom this bright court approves,  
His sovereign favours, and his country loves:  
Happy next him, who to these shades retires,  
Whom Nature charms, and whom the muse inspires,  
Whom humbler joys of home-felt quiet please,  
Successive study, exercise, and ease.



He gathers health from herbs the forest yields,  
And of their fragrant physic spoils the fields;  
With chymic art exalts the mineral powers,  
And draws the aromatic souls of flowers:  
Now marks the course of rolling orbs on high;  
O'er figured worlds now travels with his eye;  
Of ancient writ unlocks the learned store,  
Consults the dead, and lives past ages o'er:  
Or wandering thoughtful in the silent wood,  
Attends the duties of the wise and good,  
To observe a mean, be to himself a friend,  
To follow Nature, and regard his end;  
Or looks on Heaven with more than mortal eyes,  
Bids his free soul expatiate in the skies,  
Amid her kindred stars familiar roam,  
Survey the region, and confess her home!  
Such was the life great Scipio once admired,  
Thus Atticus, and Trumbull thus retired.

Ye sacred Nine! that all my soul possess,  
Whose raptures fire me, and whose visions bless,  
Bear me, O bear me to sequester'd scenes,  
The bowery mazes, and surrounding greens;  
To Thames's banks which fragrant breezes fill,  
Or where ye, muses, sport on Cooper's Hill  
(On Cooper's Hill eternal wreaths shall grow,  
While lasts the mountain, or while Thames shall flow):  
I seem through consecrated walks to rove,  
I hear soft music die along the grove:  
Led by the sound I roam from shade to shade,  
By godlike poets venerable made:  
Here his first lays majestic Denham sung:  
There the last numbers flow'd from Cowley's tongue.  
O early lost! what tears the river shed,  
When the sad pomp along his banks was led!  
His drooping swans on every note expire,  
And on his willows hung each muse's lyre.



Since fate relentless stopp'd their heavenly voice,  
No more the forests ring, or groves rejoice;  
Who now shall charm the shades, where Cowley strung  
His living harp, and lofty Denham sung?  
But, hark! the groves rejoice, the forest rings!  
Are these revived? or is it Granville sings?  
'T is yours, my lord, to bless our soft retreats,  
And call the muses to their ancient seats;  
To paint anew the flowery sylvan scenes,  
To crown the forests with immortal greens,  
Make Windsor hills in lofty numbers rise,  
And lift her turrets nearer to the skies;  
To sing those honours you deserve to wear,  
And add new lustre to her silver star.

Here noble Surrey felt the sacred rage,  
Surrey, the Granville of a former age:  
Matchless his pen, victorious was his lance,  
Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance:  
In the same shades the Cupids tuned his lyre,  
To the same notes, of love and soft desire:  
Fair Geraldine, bright object of his vow,  
Then fill'd the groves, as heavenly Mira now.

Oh wouldst thou sing what heroes Windsor bore,  
What kings first breathed upon her winding shore,  
Or raise old warriors, whose adored remains  
In weeping vaults her hallow'd earth contains!  
With Edward's acts adorn the shining page,  
Stretch his long triumphs down through every age;  
Draw monarchs chain'd, and Cressi's glorious field,  
The lilies blazing on the regal shield:  
Then, from her roofs when Verrio's colours fall,  
And leave inanimate the naked wall,  
Still in thy song should vanquish'd France appear,  
And bleed for ever under Britain's spear.

Let softer strains ill-fated Henry mourn,  
And palms eternal flourish round his urn.



Here o'er the martyr-king the marble weeps,  
And, fast beside him, once-fear'd Edward sleeps:  
Whom not the extended Albion could contain,  
From old Belerium to the northern main,  
The grave unites; where e'en the great find rest,  
And blended lie the oppressor and the oppress'd!

Make sacred Charles's tomb for ever known  
(Obscure the place, and uninscribed the stone):  
Oh fact accursed! what tears has Albion shed!  
Heavens, what new wounds! and how her old have bled!  
She saw her sons with purple deaths expire,  
Her sacred domes involved in rolling fire,  
A dreadful series of intestine wars,  
Inglorious triumphs, and dishonest scars.  
At length great Anna said, "Let discord cease!"  
She said, the world obey'd, and all was peace!

In that blest moment from his oozy bed  
Old father Thames advanced his reverend head;  
His tresses dropp'd with dew, and o'er the stream  
His shining horns diffused a golden gleam:  
Graved on his urn appear'd the moon, that guides  
His swelling waters, and alternate tides;  
The figured streams in waves of silver roll'd,  
And on their banks Augusta rose in gold;  
Around his throne the sea-born brothers stood,  
Who swell with tributary urns his flood!  
First the famed authors of his ancient name,  
The winding Isis, and the fruitful Thame:  
The Kennet swift, for silver eels renown'd;  
The Loddon slow, with verdant alders crown'd;  
Cole, whose dark streams his flowery islands lave;  
And chalky Wey, that rolls a milky wave:  
The blue, transparent Vandalis appears:  
The gulfy Lee his sedgy tresses rears;  
And sullen Mole, that hides his diving flood;  
And silent Darent stain'd with Danish blood.



High in the midst, upon his urn reclined  
(His sea-green mantle waving with the wind),  
The god appear'd: he turn'd his azure eyes  
Where Windsor-domes and pompous turrets rise;  
Then bow'd, and spoke; the winds forget to roar,  
And the hush'd waves glide softly to the shore:

“Hail, sacred peace! hail, long-expected days,  
That Thames's glory to the stars shall raise!  
Though Tiber's streams immortal Rome behold,  
Though foaming Hermus swells with tides of gold,  
From heaven itself though sevenfold Nilus flows,  
And harvests on a hundred realms bestows;  
These now no more shall be the muses' themes,  
Lost in my fame, as in the sea their streams.  
Let Volga's banks with iron squadrons shine,  
And groves of lances glitter on the Rhine;  
Let barbarous Ganges arm a servile train,  
Be mine the blessings of a peaceful reign.  
No more my sons shall dye with British blood  
Red Iber's sands, or Ister's foaming flood:  
Safe on my shore each unmolested swain  
Shall tend the flocks, or reap the bearded grain:  
The shady empire shall retain no trace  
Of war or blood, but in the sylvan chase:  
The trumpet sleep, while cheerful horns are blown,  
And arms employ'd on birds and beasts alone.  
Behold! the ascending villas on my side,  
Project long shadows o'er the crystal tide.  
Behold! Augusta's glittering spires increase,  
And temples rise, the beauteous works of peace.  
I see, I see, where two fair cities bend  
Their ample bow, a new Whitehall ascend!  
There mighty nations shall inquire their doom,  
The world's great oracle in times to come;  
There kings shall sue, and suppliant states be seen  
Once more to bend before a British queen.



“Thy trees, fair Windsor! now shall leave their woods,  
And half thy forests rush into the floods;  
Bear Britain's thunder, and her cross display,  
To the bright regions of the rising day;  
Tempt icy seas, where scarce the waters roll,  
Where clearer flames glow round the frozen pole;  
Or under southern skies exalt their sails,  
Led by new stars, and borne by spicy gales!  
For me the balm shall bleed, and amber flow,  
The coral redden, and the ruby glow,  
The pearly shell its lucid globe unfold,  
And Phœbus warm the ripening ore to gold.  
The time shall come, when free as seas or wind,  
Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind,  
Whole nations enter with each swelling tide,  
And seas but join the regions they divide;  
Earth's distant ends our glory shall behold,  
And the new world launch forth to seek the old.  
Then ships of uncouth form shall stem the tide,  
And feather'd people crowd my wealthy side,  
And naked youths and painted chiefs admire  
Our speech, our colour, and our strange attire!  
Oh, stretch thy reign, fair peace! from shore to shore,  
Till conquest cease, and slavery be no more;  
Till the freed Indians in their native groves  
Reap their own fruits, and woo their sable loves;  
Peru once more a race of kings behold,  
And other Mexicos be roof'd with gold.  
Exiled by thee from earth to deepest hell,  
In brazen bonds shall barbarous discord dwell:  
Gigantic pride, pale terror, gloomy care,  
And mad ambition, shall attend her there:  
There purple vengeance bathed in gore retires,  
Her weapons blunted, and extinct her fires:  
There hateful envy her own snakes shall feel,  
And persecution mourn her broken wheel:



There faction roar, rebellion bite her chain,  
And gasping furies thirst for blood in vain."

Here cease thy flight, nor with unhallow'd lays  
Touch the fair fame of Albion's golden days;  
The thoughts of gods let Granville's verse recite,  
And bring the scenes of opening fate to light:  
My humble muse, in unambitious strains,  
Paints the green forests and the flowery plains,  
Where peace descending bids her olive spring,  
And scatters blessings from her dove-like wing.  
E'en I more sweetly pass my careless days,  
Pleased in the silent shade with empty praise;  
Enough for me, that to the listening swains  
First in these fields I sang the sylvan strains.

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# ODE ON ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

MDCCVIII.

*And other Pieces for Music.*

---

DESCEND, ye Nine! descend, and sing;  
The breathing instruments inspire;  
Wake into voice each silent string,  
And sweep the sounding lyre!

In a sadly-pleasing strain  
Let the warbling lute complain:

Let the loud trumpet sound,

Till the roofs all around

The shrill echoes rebound:

While, in more lengthen'd notes and slow,

The deep, majestic, solemn organs blow.

Hark! the numbers soft and clear

Gently steal upon the ear;

Now louder, and yet louder rise,

And fill with spreading sounds the skies;

Exulting in triumph now swell the bold notes,

In broken air trembling, the wild music floats;

Till, by degrees, remote and small,

The strains decay,

And melt away,

In a dying, dying fall.

By music, minds an equal temper know,

Nor swell too high, nor sink too low.

If in the breast tumultuous joys arise,

Music her soft, assuasive voice applies;

Or, when the soul is press'd with cares,

Exalts her in enlivening airs.



Warriors she fires with animated sounds;  
Pours balm into the bleeding lover's wounds;  
    Melancholy lifts her head,  
    Morpheus rouses from his bed,  
    Sloth unfolds her arms and wakes,  
    Listening envy drops her snakes;  
Intestine war no more our passions wage,  
And giddy factions hear away their rage.

But when our country's cause provokes to arms,  
How martial music every bosom warms!  
So when the first bold vessel dared the seas,  
High on the stern the Thracian raised his strain,  
    While Argo saw her kindred trees  
    Descend from Pelion to the main.  
    Transported demi-gods stood round,  
    And men grew heroes at the sound,  
    Inflamed with glory's charms:  
Each chief his sevenfold shield display'd,  
And half unsheathed the shining blade:  
And seas, and rocks, and skies rebound  
    To arms, to arms, to arms!

But when through all the infernal bounds,  
Which flaming Phlegethon surrounds,  
    Love, strong as death, the poet led  
    To the pale nations of the dead,  
What sounds were heard,  
What scenes appear'd,  
    O'er all the dreary coasts!  
    Dreadful gleams,  
    Dismal screams,  
    Fires that glow,  
    Shrieks of woe,  
    Sullen moans,  
    Hollow groans,  
And cries of tortured ghosts!



But, hark! he strikes the golden lyre;  
And see! the tortured ghosts respire.

See, shady forms advance!

Thy stone, O Sisyphus, stands still,  
Ixion rests upon his wheel,

And the pale spectres dance!

The Furies sink upon their iron beds,  
And snakes uncurl'd hang listening round their heads.

By the streams that ever flow,

By the fragrant winds that blow

O'er the Elysian flowers;

By those happy souls, who dwell

In yellow meads of asphodel,

Or amaranthine bowers;

By the hero's armed shades,

Glittering through the gloomy glades;

By the youths that died for love,

Wandering in the myrtle grove,

Restore, restore Eurydice to life:

Oh take the husband, or return the wife!

He sung, and hell consented

To hear the poet's prayer;

Stern Proserpine relented,

And gave him back the fair.

Thus song could prevail

O'er death, and o'er hell;

A conquest how hard and how glorious!

Though fate had fast bound her

With Styx nine times round her,

Yet music and love were victorious.

But soon, too soon the lover turns his eyes:

Again she falls, again she dies, she dies!

How wilt thou now the fatal sisters move?

No crime was thine, if't is no crime to love.

Now under hanging mountains,

Beside the falls of fountains,



Or where Hebrus wanders,  
 Rolling in meanders,  
     All alone,  
     Unheard, unknown,  
     He makes his moan;  
     And calls her ghost,  
     For ever, ever, ever lost!  
 Now with furies surrounded,  
 Despairing, confounded,  
 He trembles, he glows,  
 Amidst Rhodope's snows:  
 See, wild as the winds, o'er the desert he flies;  
 Hark! Hæmus resounds with the Bacchanals' cries —  
                     Ah see, he dies!  
 Yet e'en in death Eurydice he sung;  
 Eurydice still trembled on his tongue;  
     Eurydice the woods,  
     Eurydice the floods,  
 Eurydice the rocks and hollow mountains rung.

Music the fiercest grief can charm,  
 And fate's severest rage disarm:  
 Music can soften pain to ease,  
 And make despair and madness please:  
 Our joys below it can improve,  
 And antedate the bliss above.  
 This the divine Cecilia found,  
 And to her Maker's praise confined the sound.  
 When the full organ joins the tuneful quire,  
     The immortal powers incline their ear:  
 Borne on the swelling notes our souls aspire,  
 While solemn airs improve the sacred fire;  
     And angels lean from heaven to hear.  
 Of Orpheus now no more let poets tell;  
 To bright Cecilia greater power is given:  
     His numbers raised a shade from hell,  
     Hers lift the soul to Heaven.

---



## TWO CHORUSES

### TO THE TRAGEDY OF BRUTUS.

*Altered from Shakspeare by the Duke of Buckingham, at whose desire these two Choruses were composed, to supply as many, wanting in his Play. They were set many years afterwards by the famous Bononcini, and performed at Buckingham-house.*

#### CHORUS OF ATHENIANS.

##### *Strophe 1.*

YE shades, where sacred truth is sought;  
Groves, where immortal sages taught;  
Where heavenly visions Plato fired,  
And Epicurus lay inspired!  
In vain your guiltless laurels stood  
Unspotted long with human blood.  
War, horrid war, your thoughtful walks invades,  
And steel now glitters in the muses' shades.

##### *Antistrophe 1.*

Oh heaven-born sisters! source of art!  
Who charm the sense, or mend the heart;  
Who lead fair virtue's train along,  
Moral truth and mystic song!  
To what new clime, what distant sky,  
Forsaken, friendless, shall ye fly?  
Say, will ye bless the bleak Atlantic shore?  
Or bid the furious Gaul be rude no more?

##### *Strophe 2.*

When Athens sinks by fates unjust,  
When wild barbarians spurn her dust;  
Perhaps e'en Britain's utmost shore  
Shall cease to blush with strangers' gore:



See arts her savage sons control,  
 And Athens rising near the pole!  
 Till some new tyrant lifts his purple hand,  
 And civil madness tears them from the land.

*Antistrophe 2.*

Ye gods! what justice rules the ball!  
 Freedom and arts together fall;  
 Fools grant whate'er ambition craves,  
 And men, once ignorant, are slaves.  
 O cursed effects of civil hate,  
 In every age, in every state!  
 Still, when the lust of tyrant power succeeds,  
 Some Athens perishes, some Tully bleeds.

CHORUS OF YOUTHS AND VIRGINS.

*Semichorus.*

OH tyrant Love! hast thou possess'd  
 The prudent, learn'd, and virtuous breast?  
 Wisdom and wit in vain reclaim,  
 And arts but soften us to feel thy flame.  
 Love, soft intruder, enters here,  
 But entering learns to be sincere.  
 Marcus with blushes owns he loves,  
 And Brutus tenderly reproves.  
 Why, virtue, dost thou blame desire,  
 Which nature hath impress'd?  
 Why, nature, dost thou soonest fire  
 The mild and generous breast?

*Chorus.*

Love's purer flames the gods approve;  
 The gods and Brutus bend to love:  
 Brutus for absent Porcia sighs,  
 And sterner Cassius melts at Junia's eyes.  
 What is loose love? a transient gust,  
 Spent in a sudden storm of lust;



A vapour fed from wild desire;  
 A wandering, self-consuming fire.  
 But Hymen's kinder flames unite,  
     And burn for ever one;  
 Chaste as cold Cynthia's virgin light,  
     Productive as the sun.

*Semichorus.*

Oh source of every social tie,  
 United wish, and mutual joy!  
 What various joys on one attend,  
 As son, as father, brother, husband, friend!  
 Whether his hoary sire he spies,  
 While thousand grateful thoughts arise;  
 Or meets his spouse's fonder eye;  
 Or views his smiling progeny;  
     What tender passions take their turns,  
     What home-felt raptures move!  
 His heart now melts, now leaps, now burns,  
     With reverence, hope, and love.

*Chorus.*

Hence, guilty joys, distastes, surmises;  
 Hence, false tears, deceits, disguises,  
 Dangers, doubts, delays, surprises,  
     Fires that scorch, yet dare not shine:  
 Purest love's unwasting treasure,  
 Constant faith, fair hope, long leisure;  
 Days of ease, and nights of pleasure,  
     Sacred Hymen! these are thine.

---



## ODE ON SOLITUDE.

*Written when the Author was about twelve Years old.*

HAPPY the man, whose wish and care  
A few paternal acres bound,  
Content to breathe his native air  
In his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,  
Whose flocks supply him with attire;  
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,  
In winter fire.

Bless'd, who can unconcernedly find  
Hours, days, and years, slide soft away,  
In health of body, peace of mind,  
Quiet by day,

Sound sleep by night: study and ease,  
Together mix'd; sweet recreation,  
And innocence, which most does please  
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown;  
Thus unlamented let me die,  
Steal from the world, and not a stone  
Tell where I lie.

---



## O D E.

*The dying Christian to his Soul.*

VITAL spark of heavenly flame!

Quit, oh quit, this mortal frame:  
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying —  
Oh the pain, the bliss of dying!  
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,  
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper; angels say,  
Sister spirit, come away.

What is this absorbs me quite,  
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,  
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?  
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes; it disappears!  
Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears

With sounds seraphic ring:  
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!  
Oh grave! where is thy victory?  
Oh death! where is thy sting?

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AN  
ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

*Written in the Year 1709.*

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PART I.

Introduction. That it is as great a fault to judge ill, as to write ill, and a more dangerous one to the public, ver. 1. That a true taste is as rare to be found as a true genius, ver. 9 to 18. That most men are born with some taste, but spoiled by false education, ver. 10 to 25. The multitude of critics, and causes of them, ver. 26 to 45. That we are to study our own taste, and know the limits of it, ver. 46 to 67. Nature the best guide of judgment, ver. 68 to 87. Improved by art and rules, which are but methodized nature, ver. 88. Rules derived from the practice of ancient poets, ver. 88. to 110. That therefore the ancients are necessary to be studied by a critic, particularly Homer and Virgil, ver. 120 to 138. Of licences, and the use of them by the ancients, ver. 140 to 180. Reverence due to the ancients, and praise of them, ver. 181, &c.

'T is hard to say, if greater want of skill  
Appear in writing or in judging ill;  
But of the two, less dangerous is the offence  
To tire our patience, than mislead our sense.  
Some few in that, but numbers err in this;  
Ten censure wrong for one who writes amiss;  
A fool might once himself alone expose,  
Now one in verse makes many more in prose.

'T is with our judgments as our watches; none  
Go just alike, yet each believes his own.  
In poets as true genius is but rare,  
True taste as seldom is the critic's share;  
Both must alike from Heaven derive their light,  
These born to judge, as well as those to write.



Let such teach others who themselves excel,  
And censure freely who have written well:  
Authors are partial to their wit, 't is true;  
But are not critics to their judgment too?

Yet, if we look more closely, we shall find  
Most have the seeds of judgment in their mind: 20

Nature affords at least a glimmering light,  
The lines, though touch'd but faintly, are drawn right.

But as the slightest sketch, if justly traced,  
Is by ill-colouring but the more disgraced,  
So by false learning is good sense defaced:  
Some are bewilder'd in the maze of schools,  
And some made coxcombs nature meant but fools.

In search of wit these lose their common sense,  
And then turn critics in their own defence:  
Each burns alike, who can, or cannot write, 30  
Or with a rival's or an eunuch's spite.

All fools have still an itching to deride,  
And fain would be upon the laughing side.

If Mævius scribble in Apollo's spite,  
There are who judge still worse than he can write.

Some have at first for wits, then poets, pass'd;  
Turn'd critics next, and proved plain fools at last.  
Some neither can for wits nor critics pass,  
As heavy mules are neither horse nor ass. 39

Those half-learn'd witlings, numerous in our isle,  
As half-form'd insects on the banks of Nile;  
Unfinish'd things, one knows not what to call,  
Their generation's so equivocal:

To tell them would a hundred tongues require,  
Or one vain wit's, that might a hundred tire.

But you, who seek to give and merit fame,  
And justly bear a critic's noble name,  
Be sure yourself and your own reach to know;  
How far your genius, taste, and learning, go;  
Launch not beyond your depth, but be discreet, 50  
And mark that point where sense and dulness meet.



Nature to all things fix'd the limits fit,  
 And wisely curb'd proud man's pretending wit:  
 As on the land while here the ocean gains,  
 In other parts it leaves wide sandy plains;  
 Thus in the soul while memory prevails,  
 The solid power of understanding fails;  
 Where beams of warm imagination play,  
 The memory's soft figures melt away.  
 One science only will one genius fit;  
 So vast is art, so narrow human wit:  
 Not only bounded to peculiar arts,  
 But oft in those confined to single parts.  
 Like kings, we lose the conquests gain'd before,  
 By vain ambition still to make them more:  
 Each might his several province well command,  
 Would all but stoop to what they understand.

60

First follow nature, and your judgment frame  
 By her just standard, which is still the same:  
 Unerring nature, still divinely bright,  
 One clear, unchanged, and universal light,  
 Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,  
 At once the source, and end, and test of art.  
 Art from that fund each just supply provides;  
 Works without show, and without pomp presides:  
 In some fair body thus the informing soul  
 With spirits feeds, with vigour fills the whole,  
 Each motion guides, and every nerve sustains;  
 Itself unseen, but in the effects remains.  
 Some, to whom Heaven in wit has been profuse,  
 Want as much more, to turn it to its use;  
 For wit and judgment often are at strife,  
 Though meant each other's aid, like man and wife.  
 'T is more to guide, than spur the muse's steed;  
 Restrain his fury, than provoke his speed:  
 The winged courser, like a generous horse,  
 Shows most true mettle when you check his course.

70

79

Those rules of old discover'd, not devised,



Are nature still, but nature methodized:  
 Nature, like liberty, is but restrain'd 90  
 By the same laws which first herself ordain'd.

Hear how learn'd Greece her useful rules indites,  
 When to repress, and when indulge our flights:  
 High on Parnassus' top her sons she show'd,  
 And pointed out those arduous paths they trod;  
 Held from afar, aloft, the immortal prize,  
 And urged the rest by equal steps to rise.  
 Just precepts thus from great examples given,  
 She drew from them what they derived from Heaven.  
 The generous critic fann'd the poet's fire, 100  
 And taught the world with reason to admire.  
 Then criticism the muse's handmaid proved,  
 To dress her charms, and make her more beloved:  
 But following wits from that intention stray'd;  
 Who could not win the mistress, woo'd the maid;  
 Against the poets their own arms they turn'd,  
 Sure to hate most the men from whom they learn'd.  
 So modern 'pothecaries, taught the art  
 By doctors' bills to play the doctor's part,  
 Bold in the practice of mistaken rules, 110  
 Prescribe, apply, and call their masters fools.  
 Some on the leaves of ancient authors prey,  
 Nor time nor moths e'er spoil'd so much as they:  
 Some drily plain, without invention's aid,  
 Write dull receipts how poems may be made.  
 These leave the sense, their learning to display,  
 And those explain the meaning quite away.

You then, whose judgment the right course would steer,  
 Know well each ancient's proper character:  
 His fable, subject, scope in every page; 120  
 Religion, country, genius of his age:  
 Without all these at once before your eyes,  
 Cavil you may, but never criticise:  
 Be Homer's works your study and delight,  
 Read them by day, and meditate by night:



Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims bring,  
 And trace the muses upward to their spring:  
 Still with itself compared, his text peruse;  
 And let your comment be the Mantuan Muse.

When first young Maro, in his boundless mind 130  
 A work to outlast immortal Rome design'd,  
 Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,  
 And but from nature's fountains scorn'd to draw:  
 But when to examine every part he came,  
 Nature and Homer were, he found, the same.  
 Convinced, amazed, he checks the bold design,  
 And rules as strict his labour'd work confine,  
 As if the Stagyrite o'erlook'd each line.  
 Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;  
 To copy nature, is to copy them. 140

Some beauties yet no precepts can declare,  
 For there's a happiness as well as care.  
 Music resembles poetry; in each  
 Are nameless graces which no methods teach,  
 And which a master-hand alone can reach.  
 If, where the rules not far enough extend  
 (Since rules were made but to promote their end),  
 Some lucky licence answer to the full  
 The intent proposed, that licence is a rule.  
 Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take, 150  
 May boldly deviate from the common track;  
 From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,  
 And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art,  
 Which, without passing through the judgment, gains  
 The heart, and all its end at once attains.  
 In prospects thus, some objects please our eyes,  
 Which out of nature's common order rise,  
 The shapeless rock, or hanging precipice.  
 Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend,  
 And rise to faults true critics dare not mend. 160  
 But though the ancients thus their rules invade  
 (As kings dispense with laws themselves have made),

*maro = Virgil, greatest of ancients*



Moderns, beware! or, if you must offend  
 Against the precept, ne'er transgress its end:  
 Let it be seldom, and compell'd by need;  
 And have, at least, their precedent to plead.  
 The critic else proceeds without remorse,  
 Seizes your fame, and puts his laws in force.

I know there are, to whose presumptuous thoughts  
 Those freer beauties, e'en in them, seem faults. 170  
 Some figures monstrous and mis-shaped appear,  
 Consider'd singly, or beheld too near,  
 Which, but proportion'd to their light or place,  
 Due distance reconciles to form and grace.  
 A prudent chief not always must display  
 His powers in equal ranks, and fair array,  
 But with the occasion and the place comply,  
 Conceal his force, nay seem sometimes to fly.  
 Those oft are stratagems which errors seem,  
 Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream. 180

Still green with bays each ancient altar stands,  
 Above the reach of sacrilegious hands;  
 Secure from flames, from envy's fiercer rage,  
 Destructive war, and all-involving age.  
 See from each clime the learn'd their incense bring!  
 Hear, in all tongues consenting Pæans ring!  
 In praise so just let every voice be join'd,  
 And fill the general chorus of mankind.  
 Hail, bards triumphant! born in happier days;  
 Immortal heirs of universal praise! 190  
 Whose honours with increase of ages grow,  
 As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;  
 Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,  
 And worlds applaud that must not ye be found!  
 O may some spark of your celestial fire,  
 The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,  
 (That, on weak wings, from far pursues your flights:  
 Glows while he reads, but trembles as he writes),  
 To teach vain wits a science little known,  
 To admire superior sense, and doubt their own! 200



## PART II.

Causes hindering a true judgment. 1. Pride, ver. 201. 2. Imperfect learning, ver. 215. 3. Judging by parts, and not by the whole, ver. 233 to 288. Critics in wit, language, versification, only, 288, 305, 339, &c. 4. Being too hard to please, or too apt to admire, ver. 384. 5. Partiality — too much love to a sect, — to the ancients or moderns, ver. 394. 6. Prejudice or prevention, ver. 408. 7. Singularity, ver. 424. 8. Inconstancy, ver. 430. 9. Party spirit, ver. 452, &c. 10. Envy, ver. 466. Against envy, and in praise of good-nature, ver. 508, &c. When severity is chiefly to be used by the critics, ver. 526, &c.

Of all the causes which conspire to blind  
 Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,  
 What the weak head with strongest bias rules,  
 Is pride, the never-failing vice of fools.  
 Whatever nature has in worth denied,  
 She gives in large recruits of needful pride'  
 For as in bodies, thus in souls, we find  
 What wants in blood and spirits, swell'd with wind:  
 Pride, where wit fails, steps in to our defence,  
 And fills up all the mighty void of sense. 210  
 If once right reason drives that cloud away,  
 Truth breaks upon us with resistless day.  
 Trust not yourself; but, your defects to know,  
 Make use of every friend — and every foe.  
 A little learning is a dangerous thing!  
 Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring;  
 There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,  
 And drinking largely sobers us again.  
 Fired at first sight with what the muse imparts,  
 In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts, 220  
 While, from the bounded level of our mind,  
 Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;  
 But more advanced, behold with strange surprise  
 New distant scenes of endless science rise!  
 So pleased at first the towering Alps we try,  
 Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky!



The eternal snows appear already pass'd,  
 And the first clouds and mountains seem the last:  
 But, those attain'd, we tremble to survey  
 The growing labours of the lengthen'd way: 230  
 The increasing prospect tires our wandering eyes,  
 Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

A perfect judge will read each work of wit  
 With the same spirit that its author writ:  
 Survey the whole, nor seek slight faults to find  
 Where nature moves, and rapture warms the mind;  
 Nor lose, for that malignant dull delight,  
 The generous pleasure to be charm'd with wit.  
 But, in such lays as neither ebb nor flow,  
 Correctly cold, and regularly low, 240  
 That, shunning faults, one quiet tenour keep;  
 We cannot blame indeed — but we may sleep.  
 In wit, as nature, what affects our hearts  
 Is not the exactness of peculiar parts;  
 'T is not a lip, or eye, we beauty call,  
 But the joint force and full result of all.  
 Thus when we view some well-proportion'd dome,  
 (The world's just wonder, and e'en thine, O Rome!)  
 No single parts unequally surprise,  
 All comes united to the admiring eyes; 250  
 No monstrous height, or breadth, or length appear;  
 The whole at once is bold, and regular.

Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,  
 Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.  
 In every work regard the writer's end,  
 Since none can compass more than they intend;  
 And if the means be just, the conduct true,  
 Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due.  
 As men of breeding, sometimes men of wit,  
 To avoid great errors, must the less commit; 260  
 Neglect the rules each verbal critic lays,  
 For not to know some trifles, is a praise.  
 Most critics, fond of some subservient art,



Still make the whole depend upon a part:  
 They talk of principles, but notions prize,  
 And all to one loved folly sacrifice.

Once on a time, La Mancha's knight, they say,  
 A certain bard encountering on the way,  
 Discoursed in terms as just, with looks as sage,  
 As e'er could Dennis, of the Grecian stage;  
 Concluding all were desperate sots and fools,  
 Who durst depart from Aristotle's rules.  
 Our author, happy in a judge so nice,  
 Produced his play, and begg'd the knight's advice;  
 Made him observe the subject, and the plot,  
 The manners, passions, unities; what not?  
 All which, exact to rule, were brought about,  
 Were but a combat in the lists left out.

"What! leave the combat out?" exclaims the knight.

"Yes, or we must renounce the Stagyrte." —

"Not so, by Heaven! (he answers in a rage)

"Knights, squires, and steeds, must enter on the stage." —

"So vast a throng the stage can ne'er contain." —

"Then build a new, or act it on a plain."

Thus critics, of less judgment than caprice,  
 Curious, not knowing, not exact, but nice,  
 Form short ideas; and offend in arts  
 (As most in manners) by a love to parts.

Some to conceit alone their taste confine,  
 And glittering thoughts struck out at every line;  
 Pleased with a work where nothing's just or fit;  
 One glaring chaos and wild heap of wit.  
 Poets, like painters, thus unskill'd to trace  
 The naked nature and the living grace,  
 With gold and jewels cover every part,  
 And hide with ornaments their want of art.  
 True wit is nature to advantage dress'd,  
 What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;  
 Something, whose truth convinced at sight we find,  
 That gives us back the image of our mind.

270

280

290

300



As shades more sweetly recommend the light,  
 So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit:  
 For works may have more wit than does them good,  
 As bodies perish through excess of blood.

Others for language all their care express,  
 And value books, as women men, for dress:  
 Their praise is still, — the style is excellent;  
 The sense, they humbly take upon content.  
 Words are like leaves; and where they most abound,  
 Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.

310

False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,  
 Its gaudy colours spreads on every place;  
 The face of nature we no more survey,  
 All glares alike, without distinction gay:  
 But true expression, like the unchanging sun,  
 Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon;  
 It gilds all objects, but it alters none.

Expression is the dress of thought, and still  
 Appears more decent, as more suitable:  
 A vile conceit in pompous words express'd,  
 Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd:  
 For different styles with different subjects sort,  
 As several garbs, with country, town, and court.  
 Some by old words to fame have made pretence,  
 Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense;  
 Such labour'd nothings, in so strange a style,  
 Amaze the unlearn'd, and make the learned smile.

320

Unlucky, as Fungosa in the play,  
 These sparks with awkward vanity display  
 What the fine gentleman wore yesterday;  
 And but so mimic ancient wits at best,  
 As apes our grandsires in their doublets dress'd.  
 In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold;  
 Alike fantastic, if too new or old:  
 Be not the first by whom the new are tried,  
 Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

330

But most by numbers judge a poet's song;



And smooth or rough, with them, is right or wrong :  
 In the bright muse though thousand charms conspire,  
 Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire ; 340  
 Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,  
 Not mend their minds ; as some to church repair,  
 Not for the doctrine, but the music there.  
 These, equal syllables alone require,  
 Though oft the ear the open vowels tire ;  
 While expletives their feeble aid do join,  
 And ten low words oft creep in one dull line :  
 While they ring round the same unvaried chimes,  
 With sure returns of still expected rhymes ;  
 Where'er you find "the cooling western breeze," 350  
 In the next line it "whispers through the trees :"  
 If crystal streams "with pleasing murmurs creep,"  
 The reader's threaten'd (not in vain) with "sleep :"  
 Then at the last and only couplet, fraught  
 With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,  
 A needless Alexandrine ends the song,  
 That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.  
 Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know  
 What 's roundly smooth, or languishingly slow ;  
 And praise the easy vigour of a line, 360  
 Where Denham's strength and Waller's sweetness join.  
 True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,  
 As those move easiest who have learnt to dance.  
 'T is not enough no harshness gives offence,  
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense :  
 Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,  
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows ;  
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
 The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar.  
 When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw, 370  
 The line too labours, and the words move slow :  
 Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
 Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main.  
 Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,



And bid alternate passions fall and rise !  
 While, at each change, the son of Libyan Jove  
 Now burns with glory, and then melts with love ;  
 Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,  
 Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow :  
 Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found,  
 And the world's victor stood subdued by sound !  
 The power of music all our hearts allow,  
 And what Timotheus was, is Dryden now.

380

Avoid extremes ; and shun the fault of such  
 Who still are pleased too little or too much.  
 At every trifle scorn to take offence,  
 That always shows great pride, or little sense :  
 Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best,  
 Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.  
 Yet let not each gay turn thy rapture move ;  
 For fools admire, but men of sense approve :  
 As things seem large which we through mists descry,  
 Dulness is ever apt to magnify.

390

Some foreign writers, some our own despise ;  
 The ancients only, or the moderns prize :  
 Thus wit, like faith, by each man is applied  
 To one small sect, and all are damn'd beside.  
 Meanly they seek the blessing to confine,  
 And force that sun but on a part to shine,  
 Which not alone the southern wit sublimed,  
 But ripens spirits in cold northern climes ;  
 Which from the first has shone on ages past,  
 Enlights the present, and shall warm the last ;  
 Though each may feel increases and decays,  
 And see now clearer and now darker days.  
 Regard not then if wit be old or new,  
 But blame the false, and value still the true.

400

Some ne'er advance a judgment of their own,  
 But catch the spreading notion of the town ;  
 They reason and conclude by precedent,  
 And own stale nonsense which they ne'er invent.

410



Some judge of authors' names, not works, and then  
 Nor praise nor blame the writings, but the men.  
 Of all this servile herd, the worst is he  
 That in proud dulness joins with quality;  
 A constant critic at the great man's board,  
 To fetch and carry nonsense for my lord.  
 What woful stuff this madrigal would be,  
 In some starved hackney'd sonneteer, or me!  
 But let a lord once own the happy lines,  
 How the wit brightens! how the style refines!  
 Before his sacred name flies every fault,  
 And each exalted stanza teems with thought!

420

The vulgar thus through imitation err;  
 As oft the learn'd by being singular;  
 So much they scorn the crowd, that if the throng  
 By chance go right, they purposely go wrong:  
 So schismatics the plain believers quit,  
 And are but damn'd for having too much wit.  
 Some praise at morning what they blame at night,  
 But always think the last opinion right,  
 A muse by these is like a mistress used,  
 This hour she's idolized, the next abused;  
 While their weak heads, like towns unfortified,  
 'Twixt sense and nonsense daily change their side.  
 Ask them the cause; they're wiser still, they say;  
 And still to-morrow's wiser than to-day.  
 We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow;  
 Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so.  
 Once school-divines this zealous isle o'erspread;  
 Who knew most sentences was deepest read:  
 Faith, Gospel, all, seem'd made to be disputed,  
 And none had sense enough to be confuted:  
 Scotists and Thomists, now in peace remain,  
 Amidst their kindred cobwebs in Duck-lane.  
 If faith itself has different dresses worn,  
 What wonder modes in wit should take their turn?  
 Oft, leaving what is natural and fit,

429

440



The current folly proves the ready wit;  
And authors think their reputation safe, 450  
Which lives as long as fools are pleased to laugh.

Some, valuing those of their own side or mind,  
Still make themselves the measure of mankind:  
Fondly we think we honour merit then,  
When we but praise ourselves in other men.  
Parties in wit attend on those of state,  
And public faction doubles private hate.  
Pride, malice, folly, against Dryden rose,  
In various shapes of parsons, critics, beaux:  
But sense survived, when merry jests were past; 460  
For rising merit will buoy up at last.

Might he return, and bless once more our eyes,  
New Blackmores and new Milbourns must arise:  
Nay, should great Homer lift his awful head,  
Zoilus again would start up from the dead.  
Envy will merit, as its shade, pursue;  
But, like a shadow, proves the substance true:  
For envied wit, like Sol eclipsed, makes known  
The opposing body's grossness, not its own.  
When first that sun too powerful beams displays, 470  
It draws up vapours which obscure its rays;  
But e'en those clouds at last adorn its way,  
Reflect new glories, and augment the day.

Be thou the first true merit to befriend;  
His praise is lost who stays till all commend.  
Short is the date, alas! of modern rhymes,  
And 't is but just to let them live betimes.  
No longer now that golden age appears,  
When patriarch-wits survived a thousand years:  
Now length of fame (our second life) is lost, 480  
And bare threescore is all e'en that can boast;  
Our sons their fathers' failing language see,  
And such as Chaucer is, shall Dryden be.  
So when the faithful pencil has design'd  
Some bright idea of the master's mind,



Where a new world leaps out at his command,  
 And ready nature waits upon his hand;  
 When the ripe colours soften and unite,  
 And sweetly melt into just shade and light;  
 When mellowing years their full perfection give, 490  
 And each bold figure just begins to live;  
 The treacherous colours the fair art betray,  
 And all the bright creation fades away!

Unhappy wit, like most mistaken things,  
 Atones not for that envy which it brings;  
 In youth alone its empty praise we boast,  
 But soon the short-lived vanity is lost;  
 Like some fair flower the early spring supplies,  
 That gaily blooms, but e'en in blooming dies.  
 What is this wit, which must our cares employ? 500  
 The owner's wife, that other men enjoy;  
 Then most our trouble still when most admired,  
 And still the more we give, the more required:  
 Whose fame with pains we guard, but lose with ease,  
 Sure some to vex, but never all to please;  
 'T is what the vicious fear, the virtuous shun;  
 By fools 't is hated, and by knaves undone!

If wit so much from ignorance undergo,  
 Ah, let not learning too commence its foe!  
 Of old, those met rewards, who could excel, 510  
 And such were praised who but endeavour'd well;  
 Though triumphs were to generals only due,  
 Crowns were reserved to grace the soldiers too.  
 Now they who reach Parnassus' lofty crown,  
 Employ their pains to spurn some others down;  
 And while self-love each jealous writer rules,  
 Contending wits become the sport of fools:  
 But still the worst with most regret commend,  
 For each ill author is as bad a friend.  
 To what base ends, and by what abject ways, 520  
 Are mortals urged through sacred lust of praise!  
 Ah, ne'er so dire a thirst of glory boast,



Nor in the critic let the man be lost.  
 Good-nature and good-sense must ever join;  
 To err, is human; to forgive, divine.

But if in noble minds some dregs remain,  
 Not yet purged off, of spleen and sour disdain;  
 Discharge that rage on more provoking crimes,  
 Nor fear a dearth in these flagitious times.  
 No pardon vile obscenity should find, 530

Though wit and art conspire to move your mind;  
 But dulness with obscenity must prove  
 As shameful sure as impotence in love.  
 In the fat age of pleasure, wealth, and ease,  
 Sprang the rank weed, and thrived with large increase:  
 When love was all an easy monarch's care;  
 Seldom at council, never in a war:

Jilts ruled the state, and statesmen farces writ;  
 Nay wits had pensions, and young lords had wit:  
 The fair sat panting at a courtier's play, 540  
 And not a mask went unimproved away;  
 The modest fan was lifted up no more,  
 And virgins smiled at what they blush'd before.

The following licence of a foreign reign  
 Did all the dregs of bold Socinus drain;  
 Then unbelieving priests reform'd the nation,  
 And taught more pleasant methods of salvation;  
 Where Heaven's free subjects might their rights dispute,  
 Lest God himself should seem too absolute:

Pulpits their sacred satire learn'd to spare, 550  
 And vice admired to find a flatterer there!

Encouraged thus, wit's Titans braved the skies,  
 And the press groan'd with licensed blasphemies.  
 These monsters, critics! with your darts engage,  
 Here point your thunder, and exhaust your rage!  
 Yet shun their fault, who, scandalously nice,  
 Will needs mistake an author into vice;  
 All seems infected that the infected spy,  
 As all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye.



## PART III.

Rules for the conduct of manners in a critic. 1. Candour, ver. 563. Modesty, ver. 566. Good-breeding, ver. 572. Sincerity and freedom of advice, ver. 578. 2. When one's counsel is to be restrained, ver. 584. Character of an incorrigible poet, ver. 600; and of an impertinent critic, ver. 610, &c. Character of a good critic, ver. 629. The history of criticism, and characters of the best critics: Aristotle, ver. 645. Horace, ver. 653. Dionysius, ver. 665. Petronius, ver. 667. Quintilian, ver. 670. Longinus, ver. 675. Of the decay of criticism, and its revival: Erasmus, ver. 693. Vida, ver. 705. Boileau, ver. 714. Lord Roscommon, &c. ver. 725. Conclusion.

LEARN then what morals critics ought to show;  
For 't is but half a judge's task to know. 561

'T is not enough, taste, judgment, learning, join;  
In all you speak, let truth and candour shine;  
That not alone what to your sense is due  
All may allow, but seek your friendship too.

Be silent always, when you doubt your sense;  
And speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence:  
Some positive, persisting fops we know,  
Who, if once wrong, will needs be always so;  
But you, with pleasure, own your errors past, 570  
And make each day a critique on the last.

'T is not enough your counsel still be true;  
Blunt truths more mischief than nice falsehoods do;  
Men must be taught as if you taught them not,  
And things unknown proposed as things forgot.  
Without good-breeding truth is disapproved;  
'That only makes superior sense beloved.

Be niggards of advice on no pretence;  
For the worst avarice is that of sense.  
With mean complacence, ne'er betray your trust,  
Nor be so civil as to prove unjust. 581  
Fear not the anger of the wise to raise;  
Those best can bear reproof, who merit praise.

'T were well might critics still this freedom take:  
But Appius reddens at each word you speak,



And stares tremendous, with a threatening eye,  
 Like some fierce tyrant in old tapestry.  
 Fear most to tax an honourable fool,  
 Whose right it is, uncensured, to be dull!  
 Such, without wit, are poets when they please, 590  
 As without learning they can take degrees.  
 Leave dangerous truths to unsuccessful satires,  
 And flattery to fulsome dedicators,  
 Whom, when they praise, the world believes no more  
 Than when they promise to give scribbling o'er.  
 'T is best sometimes your censure to restrain,  
 And charitably let the dull be vain:  
 Your silence there is better than your spite;  
 For who can rail so long as they can write?  
 Still humming on, their drowsy course they keep,  
 And lash'd so long, like tops, are lash'd asleep. 601  
 False steps but help them to renew the race,  
 As, after stumbling, jades will mend their pace.  
 What crowds of these, impenitently bold,  
 In sounds and jingling syllables grown old,  
 Still run on poets, in a raging vein,  
 E'en to the dregs and squeezings of the brain,  
 Strain out the last dull droppings of their sense,  
 And rhyme with all the rage of impotence!

Such shameless bards we have: and yet 'tis true,  
 There are as mad, abandon'd critics too. 611  
 The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read,  
 With loads of learned lumber in his head,  
 With his own tongue still edifies his ears,  
 And always listening to himself appears.  
 All books he reads, and all he reads assails,  
 From Dryden's Fables down to Durfey's Tales:  
 With him most authors steal their works, or buy;  
 Garth did not write his own Dispensary.  
 Name a new play, and he 's the poet's friend, 620  
 Nay, show'd his faults — but when would poets mend?  
 No place so sacred from such fops is barr'd,



Nor is Paul's church more safe than Paul's churchyard:  
 Nay, fly to altars, there they'll talk you dead;  
 For fools rush in where angels fear to tread.  
 Distrustful sense with modest caution speaks,  
 It still looks home, and short excursions makes;  
 But rattling nonsense in full volleys breaks,  
 And, never shock'd, and never turn'd aside,  
 Bursts out, resistless, with a thundering tide. 630

But where's the man who counsel can bestow,  
 Still pleased to teach, and yet not proud to know?  
 Unbiass'd, or by favour, or by spite;  
 Not dully prepossess'd, nor blindly right;  
 Though learn'd, well-bred; and though well-bred, sincere;  
 Modestly bold and humanly severe;  
 Who to a friend his faults can freely show,  
 And gladly praise the merit of a foe;  
 Bless'd with a taste exact, yet unconfined;  
 A knowledge both of books and human kind; 640  
 Generous converse; a soul exempt from pride;  
 And love to praise, with reason on his side?

Such once were critics; such the happy few  
 Athens and Rome in better ages knew:  
 The mighty Stagyrte first left the shore,  
 Spread all his sails, and durst the deeps explore:  
 He steer'd securely, and discover'd far,  
 Led by the light of the Mæonian star.  
 Poets, a race long unconfined and free,  
 Still fond and proud of savage liberty, 650  
 Received his laws, and stood convinced 't was fit  
 Who conquer'd nature, should preside o'er wit.

Horace still charms with graceful negligence,  
 And without method talks us into sense;  
 Will, like a friend, familiarly convey  
 The truest notions in the easiest way.  
 He who, supreme in judgment as in wit,  
 Might boldly censure, as he boldly writ,  
 Yet judged with coolness, though he sung with fire;



His precepts teach but what his works inspire. 660  
 Our critics take a contrary extreme,  
 They judge with fury, but they write with phlegm:  
 Nor suffers Horace more in wrong translations  
 By wits, than critics in as wrong quotations.

See Dionysius Homer's thoughts refine,  
 And call new beauties forth from every line!

Fancy and art in gay Petronius please,  
 The scholar's learning with the courtier's ease.

In grave Quintilian's copious work, we find  
 The justest rules and clearest method join'd: 670  
 Thus useful arms in magazines we place,  
 All ranged in order, and disposed with grace,  
 But less to please the eye than arm the hand,  
 Still fit for use, and ready at command.

Thee, bold Longinus! all the Nine inspire,  
 And bless their critic with a poet's fire:  
 An ardent judge, who, zealous in his trust,  
 With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just;  
 Whose own example strengthens all his laws;  
 And is himself that great sublime he draws. 680

Thus long succeeding critics justly reign'd,  
 Licence repress'd, and useful laws ordain'd;  
 Learning and Rome alike in empire grew,  
 And arts still follow'd where her eagles flew;  
 From the same foes, at last, both felt their doom,  
 And the same age saw learning fall, and Rome.  
 With tyranny then superstition join'd,  
 As that the body, this enslaved the mind;  
 Much was believed, but little understood,  
 And to be dull was construed to be good: 690  
 A second deluge learning thus o'er-ran,  
 And the monks finish'd what the Goths began.

At length Erasmus, that great injured name  
 (The glory of the priesthood, and the shame!)  
 Stemm'd the wild torrent of a barbarous age,  
 And drove those holy Vandals off the stage.



But see! each muse, in Leo's golden days,  
 Starts from her trance, and trims her wither'd bays;  
 Rome's ancient genius, o'er its ruins spread,  
 Shakes off the dust, and rears his reverend head.  
 Then sculpture and her sister-arts revive;  
 Stones leap'd to form, and rocks began to live:  
 With sweeter notes each rising temple rung;  
 A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung.  
 Immortal Vida! on whose honour'd brow  
 The poet's bays and critic's ivy grow:  
 Cremona now shall ever boast thy name,  
 As next in place to Mantua, next in fame!

701

But soon, by impious arms from Latium chased,  
 Their ancient bounds the banish'd muses pass'd:  
 Thence arts o'er all the northern world advance,  
 But critic-learning flourish'd most in France;  
 The rules a nation born to serve obeys,  
 And Boileau still in right of Horace sways.  
 But we, brave Britons, foreign laws despised,  
 And kept unconquer'd and uncivilised;  
 Fierce for the liberties of wit, and bold,  
 We still defied the Romans, as of old.

710

Yet some there were among the sounder few  
 Of those who less presumed, and better knew,  
 Who durst assert the juster ancient cause,  
 And here restored wit's fundamental laws.  
 Such was the muse, whose rule and practice tell,  
 "Nature's chief master-piece is writing well."  
 Such was Roscommon, not more learn'd than good,  
 With manners generous as his noble blood;  
 To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,  
 And every author's merit but his own.  
 Such late was Walsh, the muse's judge and friend,  
 Who justly knew to blame or to commend;  
 To failings mild, but zealous for desert;  
 The clearest head, and the sincerest heart.  
 This humble praise, lamented shade! receive,

720

730



This praise at least a grateful muse may give:  
The muse, whose early voice you taught to sing,  
Prescribed her heights, and pruned her tender wing,  
(Her guide now lost) no more attempts to rise,  
But in low numbers short excursions tries;  
Content, if hence the unlearn'd their wants may view,  
The learn'd reflect on what before they knew: 740  
Careless of censure, nor too fond a fame;  
Still pleased to praise, yet not afraid to blame:  
Averse alike to flatter or offend;  
Not free from faults, nor yet too vain to mend.

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THE  
RAPE OF THE LOCK,

AN HEROI-COMICAL POEM,

*Written in the Year 1712.*

---

TO MRS. ARABELLA FERMOR.

MADAM,

It will be in vain to deny that I have some regard for this piece, since I dedicate it to you; yet you may bear me witness, it was intended only to divert a few young ladies, who have good sense and good humour enough to laugh not only at their sex's little unguarded follies, but at their own. But as it was communicated with the air of a secret, it soon found its way into the world. An imperfect copy having been offered to a bookseller, you had the good-nature for my sake to consent to the publication of one more correct. This I was forced to, before I had executed half my design, for the machinery was entirely wanting to complete it.

The machinery, Madam, is a term invened by the critics, to signify that part which the deities, angels, or demons, are made to act in a poem; for the ancient poets are in one respect like many modern ladies: let an action be never so trivial in itself, they always make it appear of the utmost importance. These machines I determined to raise on a very new and odd foundation, the Rosicrucian doctrine of spirits.

I know how disagreeable it is to make use of hard words before a lady; but it is so much the concern of a poet to have



his works understood, and particularly by your sex, that you must give me leave to explain two or three difficult terms.

The Rosicrucians are a people I must bring you acquainted with. The best account I know of them is in a French book called *Le Compte de Gabalis*, which, both in its title and size, is so like a novel, that many of the fair sex have read it for one by mistake. According to these gentlemen, the four elements are inhabited by spirits which they call Sylphs, Gnomes, Nymphs, and Salamanders. The Gnomes, or demons of earth, delight in mischief; but the Sylphs, whose habitation is in the air, are the best-conditioned creatures imaginable; for they say, any mortal may enjoy the most intimate familiarities with these gentle spirits, upon a condition very easy to all true adepts — an inviolate preservation of chastity.

As to the following cantos, all the passages of them are as fabulous as the vision at the beginning, or the transformation at the end (except the loss of your hair, which I always mention with reverence). The human persons are as fictitious as the airy ones; and the character of Belinda, as it is now managed, resembles you in nothing but in beauty.

If this poem had as many graces as there are in your person or in your mind, yet I could never hope it should pass through the world half so uncensured as you have done. But let its fortune be what it will, mine is happy enough to have given me this occasion of assuring you that I am, with the truest esteem,

Madam,  
Your most obedient, humble servant,  
A. POPE.

---



# THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

---

Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos;  
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis.

---

MART.

## CANTO I.

WHAT dire offence from amorous causes springs,  
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,  
I sing; — this verse to Caryl, Muse! is due:  
This e'en Belinda may vouchsafe to view:  
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,  
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.

Say what strange motive, goddess! could compel  
A well-bred lord to assault a gentle belle?  
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplored,  
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?  
In tasks so bold, can little men engage?  
And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty rage?

Sol through white curtains shot a timorous ray,  
And oped those eyes that must eclipse the day:  
Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,  
And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake:  
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,  
And the press'd watch return'd a silver sound.  
Belinda still her downy pillow press'd,  
Her guardian Sylph prolong'd the balmy rest:  
'T was he had summon'd to her silent bed  
The morning dream that hover'd o'er her head.  
A youth more glittering than a birth-night beau  
(That e'en in slumber caused her cheek to glow)



Seem'd to her ear his winning lips to lay,  
And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say:  
    "Fairerest of mortals, thou distinguish'd care  
Of thousand bright inhabitants of air!  
If e'er one vision touch'd thy infant thought,  
Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught;  
Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen,  
The silver token, and the circled green,  
Or virgins visited by angel-powers,  
With golden crowns and wreaths of heavenly flowers;  
Hear, and believe! thy own importance know,  
Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.  
Some secret truths, from learned pride conceal'd.  
To maids alone and children are reveal'd,  
What, though no credit doubting wits may give,  
The fair and innocent shall still believe.  
Know then, unnumber'd spirits round thee fly.  
The light militia of the lower sky:  
These, though unseen, are ever on the wing,  
Hang o'er the box, and hover round the ring.  
Think what an equipage thou hast in air,  
And view with scorn two pages and a chair.  
As now your own, our beings were of old,  
And once enclosed in woman's beauteous mould;  
Thence, by a soft transition we repair,  
From earthly vehicles to those of air.  
Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,  
That all her vanities at once are dead:  
Succeeding vanities she still regards,  
And though she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.  
Her joy in gilded chariots, when alive,  
And love of ombre, after death survive.  
For when the fair in all their pride expire,  
To their first elements their souls retire:  
The sprites of fiery termagants in flame  
Mount up, and take a Salamander's name.  
Soft yielding minds to water glide away,



And sip, with nymphs, their elemental tea.  
The graver prude sinks downward to a Gnome,  
In search of mischief still on earth to roam.  
The light coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,  
And sport and flutter in the fields of air.

“Know farther yet; whoever fair and chaste  
Rejects mankind, is by some Sylph embraced:  
For, spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease  
Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.  
What guards the purity of melting maids,  
In courtly balls, and midnight masquerades,  
Safe from the treacherous friend, the daring spark,  
The glance by day, the whisper in the dark,  
When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,  
When music softens, and when dancing fires?  
'T is but their Sylph, the wise celestials know,  
Though honour is the word with men below.

“Some nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,  
For life predestined to the Gnomes' embrace.  
These swell their prospects, and exalt their pride,  
When offers are disdain'd, and love denied:  
Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,  
While peers, and dukes, and all their sweeping train,  
And garters, stars, and coronets appear,  
And in soft sounds, 'your grace' salutes their ear.  
'T is these that early taint the female soul,  
Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,  
Teach infant cheeks a hidden blush to know,  
And little hearts to flutter at a beau.

“Oft, when the world imagine women stray,  
The Sylphs through mystic mazes guide their way,  
Through all the giddy circle they pursue,  
And old impertinence expel by new.  
What tender maid but must a victim fall  
To one man's treat, but for another's ball?  
When Florio speaks, what virgin could withstand,  
If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?



With varying vanities, from every part,  
They shift the moving toy-shop of their heart;  
Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots strive,  
Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches drive.  
This erring mortals levity may call;  
Oh, blind to truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.

“Of these am I, who thy protection claim,  
A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.  
Late, as I ranged the crystal wilds of air,  
In the clear mirror of thy ruling star  
I saw, alas! some dread event impend,  
Ere to the main this morning sun descend;  
But Heaven reveals not what, or how, or where:  
Warn'd by thy Sylph, oh pious maid, beware!  
This to disclose is all thy guardian can:  
Beware of all, but most beware of man!”

He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too long,  
Leap'd up, and waked his mistress with his tongue.  
'T was then, Belinda, if report say true,  
Thy eyes first open'd on a billet-doux;  
Wounds, charms, and ardours were no sooner read,  
But all the vision vanish'd from thy head.

And now unveil'd, the toilet stands display'd,  
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.  
First robed in white, the nymph intent adores,  
With head uncover'd, the cosmetic powers.  
A heavenly image in the glass appears,  
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;  
The inferior priestess, at her altar's side,  
Trembling, begins the sacred rites of pride.  
Unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here  
The various offerings of the world appear;  
From each she nicely culls with curious toil,  
And decks the goddess with the glittering spoil.  
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,  
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.  
The tortoise here and elephant unite,



Transform'd to combs, the speckled and the white.  
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,  
Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billet-doux.  
Now awful Beauty puts on all its arms;  
The fair each moment rises in her charms,  
Repairs her smiles, awakens every grace,  
And calls forth all the wonders of her face;  
Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,  
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.  
The busy sylphs surround their darling care:  
These set the head, and those divide the hair;  
Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;  
And Betty's praised for labour not her own.

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## CANTO II.

NOT with more glories in the ethereal plain,  
The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,  
Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams  
Launch'd on the bosom of the silver'd Thames.  
Fair nymphs and well-dress'd youths around her shone,  
But every eye was fix'd on her alone.  
On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,  
Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore.  
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,  
Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those:  
Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;  
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.  
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,  
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.  
Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,  
Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide:  
If to her share some female errors fall,  
Look on her face, and you'll forget them all.  
This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,  
Nourish'd two locks, which graceful hung behind



In equal curls, and well conspired to deck  
With shining ringlets the smooth ivory neck.  
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,  
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.  
With hairy springes we the birds betray;  
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey;  
Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,  
And beauty draws us with a single hair.

The adventurous baron the bright locks admired;  
He saw, he wish'd, and to the prize aspired.  
Resolved to win, he meditates the way,  
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;  
For when success a lover's toil attends,  
Few ask if fraud or force attain'd his ends.

For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implored  
Propitious Heaven, and every power adored;  
But chiefly Love; to Love an altar built,  
Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt.  
There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,  
And all the trophies of his former loves.  
With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,  
And breathes three amorous sighs to raise the fire.  
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes  
Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:  
The powers gave ear, and granted half his prayer;  
The rest the winds dispersed in empty air.

But now secure the painted vessel glides,  
The sun-beams trembling on the floating tides:  
While melting music steals upon the sky,  
And soften'd sounds along the water die;  
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,  
Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay,  
All but the Sylph; with careful thoughts oppress'd,  
The impending woe sat heavy on his breast:  
He summons straight his denizens of air;  
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:  
Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe,



That seem'd but zephyrs to the train beneath.  
Some to the sun their insect wings unfold,  
Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;  
Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,  
Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light.  
Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,  
Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew,  
Dipp'd in the richest tinctures of the skies,  
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,  
Where every beam new transient colours flings,  
Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.  
Amid the circle on the gilded mast,  
Superior by the head, was Ariel placed;  
His purple pinions opening to the sun,  
He raised his azure wand, and thus begun:

“Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give ear;  
Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Demons, hear:  
Ye know the spheres, and various tasks assign'd  
By laws eternal to the aërial kind.

Some in the fields of purest ether play,  
And bask and whiten in the blaze of day;  
Some guide the course of wandering orbs on high,  
Or roll the planets through the boundless sky;  
Some, less refined, beneath the moon's pale light  
Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,  
Or suck the mists in grosser air below,  
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,  
Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,  
Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain.

Others on earth, o'er human race preside,  
Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide:  
Of these the chief the care of nations own,  
And guard with arms divine the British throne.

“Our humbler province is to tend the fair,  
Not a less pleasing, though less glorious care;  
To save the powder from too rude a gale,  
Nor let the imprison'd essences exhale;



To draw fresh colours from the vernal flowers ;  
To steal from rainbows, ere they drop in showers ,  
A brighter wash ; to curl their waving hairs ,  
Assist their blushes , and inspire their airs ;  
Nay , oft in dreams , invention we bestow ,  
To change a flounce or add a furbelow .

“ This day , black omens threat the brightest fair  
That e’er deserved a watchful spirit’s care :  
Some dire disaster , or by force , or slight ;  
But what , or where , the Fates have wrapp’d in night .  
Whether the nymph shall break Diana’s law ,  
Or some frail china jar receive a flaw :  
Or stain her honour , or her new brocade ;  
Forget her prayers , or miss a masquerade ;  
Or lose her heart , or necklace at a ball ;  
Or whether Heaven has doom’d that Shock must fall .  
Haste then , ye spirits ! to your charge repair :  
The fluttering fan be Zephyretta’s care ;  
The drops to thee , Brillante , we consign ;  
And , Momentilla , let the watch be thine ;  
Do thou , Crispissa , tend her favourite lock ;  
Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock .

“ To fifty chosen Sylphs , of special note ,  
We trust the important charge , the petticoat :  
Oft have we known that sevenfold fence to fail ,  
Though stiff with hoops , and arm’d with ribs of whale .  
Form a strong line about the silver bound ,  
And guard the wide circumference around .

“ Whatever spirit , careless of his charge ,  
His post neglects , or leaves the fair at large ,  
Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o’ertake his sins ;  
Be stopp’d in vials , or transfix’d with pins ;  
Or plunged in lakes of bitter washes lie ,  
Or wedged whole ages in a bodkin’s eye :  
Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain ,  
While clogg’d he beats his silken wings in vain ;  
Or alum styptics , with contracting power ,



Shrink his thin essence like a shrivel'd flower :  
 Or, as Ixion fix'd, the wretch shall feel  
 The giddy motion of the whirling mill,  
 In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,  
 And tremble at the sea that froths below!"

He spoke; the spirits from the sails descend;  
 Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;  
 Some thrid the mazy ringlets of her hair;  
 Some hang upon the pendants of her ear;  
 With beating hearts the dire event they wait,  
 Anxious, and trembling for the birth of fate.

---

### CANTO III.

CLOSE by those meads, for ever crown'd with flowers,  
 Where Thames with pride surveys his rising towers,  
 There stands a structure of majestic frame,  
 Which from the neighbouring Hampton takes its name.  
 Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom  
 Of foreign tyrants, and of nymphs at home;  
 Here thou, great Anna! whom three realms obey,  
 Dost sometimes counsel take — and sometimes tea.

Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,  
 To taste awhile the pleasures of a court;  
 In various talk the instructive hours they pass'd,  
 Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;  
 One speaks the glory of a British queen,  
 And one describes a charming Indian screen;  
 A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;  
 At every word a reputation dies.

Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,  
 With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.

Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,  
 The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray:  
 The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,  
 And wretches hang that jurymen may dine;



The merchant from the Exchange returns in peace,  
And the long labours of the toilet cease.  
Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,  
Burns to encounter two adventurous knights,  
At Ombre singly to decide their doom;  
And swells her breast with conquests yet to come.  
Straight the three bands prepare in arms to join,  
Each hand the number of the sacred nine.  
Soon as she spreads her hand, the aërial guard  
Descend, and sit on each important card:  
First Ariel perch'd upon a Matadore,  
Then each according to the rank they bore;  
For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,  
Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.

Behold, four kings in majesty revered,  
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;  
And four fair queens, whose hands sustain a flower,  
The expressive emblem of their softer power;  
Four knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band;  
Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand;  
And party-colour'd troops, a shining train,  
Drawn forth to combat on the velvet plain.

The skilful nymph reviews her force with care:  
"Let spades be trumps!" she said, and trumps they were.

Now move to war her sable Matadores,  
In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.  
Spadillio first, unconquerable lord,  
Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.  
As many more Manillio forced to yield,  
And march'd a victor from the verdant field.  
Him Basto follow'd, but his fate more hard  
Gain'd but one trump, and one plebeian card.  
With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,  
The hoary majesty of Spades appears,  
Puts forth one manly leg, to sight reveal'd,  
The rest his many-colour'd robe conceal'd.  
The rebel knave, who dares his prince engage,



Proves the just victim of his royal rage.  
E'en mighty Pam, that kings and queens o'erthrew,  
And mow'd down armies in the fights of Loo,  
Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,  
Falls undistinguish'd by the victor Spade!

Thus far both armies to Belinda yield;  
Now to the baron Fate inclines the field.  
His warlike Amazon her host invades,  
The imperial consort of the crown of Spades.  
The Club's black tyrant first her victim dyed,  
Spite of his haughty mien, and barbarous pride:  
What boots the regal circle on his head,  
His giant limbs in state unwieldy spread;  
That long behind he trails his pompous robe,  
And, of all monarchs, only grasps the globe?

The baron now his Diamonds pours apace;  
The embroider'd king who shows but half his face,  
And his refulgent queen with powers combined,  
Of broken troops an easy conquest find.  
Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,  
With throngs promiscuous strow the level green.  
Thus when dispersed a routed army runs,  
Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,  
With like confusion different nations fly,  
Of various habit, and of various dye.  
The pierced battalions disunited fall,  
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.

The knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,  
And wins (oh shameful chance!) the queen of Hearts.  
At this, the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,  
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look;  
She sees, and trembles at the approaching ill,  
Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille.  
And now (as oft in some distemper'd state)  
On one nice trick depends the general fate,  
An ace of Hearts steps forth: the king unseen  
Lurk'd in her hand, and mourn'd his captive queen:



He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,  
And falls like thunder on the prostrate ace.  
The nymph exulting fills with shouts the sky;  
The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.

O thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate,  
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate.  
Sudden, these honours shall be snatch'd away,  
And cursed for ever this victorious day.

For lo! the board with cups and spoons is crown'd,  
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round:  
On shining altars of Japan they raise  
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze:  
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,  
While China's earth receives the smoking tide;  
At once they gratify their scent and taste,  
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.  
Straight hover round the fair her airy band;  
Some, as she sipp'd, the fuming liquor fann'd,  
Some o'er her lap their careful plumes display'd,  
Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.  
Coffee (which makes the politician wise,  
And see through all things with his half-shut eyes)  
Sent up in vapours to the baron's brain  
New stratagems, the radiant lock to gain.  
Ah cease, rash youth; desist ere 't is too late,  
Fear the just gods, and think of Scylla's fate!  
Changed to a bird, and sent to flit in air,  
She dearly paid for Nisus' injured hair!

But when to mischief mortals bend their will,  
How soon they find fit instruments of ill!  
Just then, Clarissa drew, with tempting grace,  
A two-edged weapon from her shining case;  
So ladies, in romance, assist their knight,  
Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.  
He takes the gift with reverence, and extends  
The little engine on his fingers' ends;  
This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,



As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.  
Swift to the lock a thousand sprites repair,  
A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair!  
And thrice they twitch'd the diamond in her ear;  
Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the foe drew near.  
Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought  
The close recesses of the virgin's thought;  
As on the nosegay in her breast reclined,  
He watch'd the ideas rising in her mind,  
Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her art,  
An earthly lover lurking at her heart.  
Amazed, confused, he found his power expired,  
Resign'd to fate, and with a sigh retired.

The peer now spreads the glittering forfex wide,  
To enclose the lock; now joins it, to divide.  
E'en then, before the fatal engine closed,  
A wretched Sylph too fondly interposed;  
Fate urged the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain  
(But airy substance soon unites again),  
The meeting points the sacred hair dissever  
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!

Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,  
And streams of horror rend the affrighted skies.  
Not louder shrieks to pitying Heaven are cast,  
When husbands, or when lap-dogs, breathe their last!  
Or when rich china vessels, fallen from high,  
In glittering dust and painted fragments lie!

"Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine  
(The victor cried); the glorious prize is mine!  
While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,  
Or in a coach and six the British fair;  
As long as Atalantis shall be read,  
Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed;  
While visits shall be paid on solemn days,  
When numerous wax-lights in bright order blaze;  
While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,  
So long my honour, name, and praise shall live!



What time would spare from steel receives its date,  
And monuments, like men, submit to fate:  
Steel could the labour of the gods destroy,  
And strike to dust the imperial towers of Troy;  
Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,  
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.  
What wonder then, fair nymph! thy hairs should feel  
The conquering force of unresisted steel?"

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## CANTO IV.

BUT anxious cares the pensive nymph oppress'd,  
And secret passions labour'd in her breast.  
Not youthful kings in battle seized alive,  
Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,  
Not ardent lovers robb'd of all their bliss,  
Not ancient ladies when refused a kiss,  
Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,  
Not Cynthia when her mantua's pinn'd awry,  
E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,  
As thou, sad virgin! for thy ravish'd hair.

For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew,  
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,  
Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite,  
As ever sullied the fair face of light,  
Down to the central earth, his proper scene,  
Repair'd to search the gloomy cave of Spleen.

Swift on his sooty pinions flits the Gnome,  
And in a vapour reach'd the dismal dome.  
No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,  
The dreaded east is all the wind that blows.  
Here in a grotto, shelter'd close from air,  
And screen'd in shades from day's detested glare,  
She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,  
Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head.



Two handmaids wait the throne ; alike in place,  
But differing far in figure and in face.  
Here stood Ill-nature like an ancient maid,  
Her wrinkled form in black and white array'd;  
With store of prayers, for mornings, nights, and noons,  
Her hand is fill'd ; her bosom with lampoons.  
There Affectation, with a sickly mien,  
Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,  
Practised to lisp, and hang the head aside,  
Faints into airs, and languishes with pride,  
On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,  
Wrapp'd in a gown, for sickness, and for show.  
The fair ones feel such maladies as these,  
When each new night-dress gives a new disease.

A constant vapour o'er the palace flies ;  
Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise ;  
Dreadful, as hermits' dreams in haunted shades,  
Or bright, as visions of expiring maids.  
Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,  
Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires :  
Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,  
And crystal domes, and angels in machines.

Unnumber'd throngs on every side are seen,  
Of bodies changed to various forms by Spleen.  
Here living tea-pots stand, one arm held out,  
One bent ; the handle this, and that the spout :  
A pipkin there, like Homer's tripod walks ;  
Here sighs a jar, and there a goose-pie talks ;  
Men prove with child, as powerful fancy works,  
And maids, turn'd bottles, call aloud for corks.

Safe pass'd the Gnome through this fantastic band,  
A branch of healing spleen-wort in his hand,  
Then thus address'd the power : "Hail, wayward queen !  
Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen :  
Parent of vapours, and of female wit,  
Who give the hysteric, or poetic fit,  
On various tempers act by various ways,



Make some take physic, others scribble plays;  
Who cause the proud their visits to delay,  
And send the godly in a pet to pray.  
A nymph there is, that all thy power disdains,  
And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.  
But, oh! if e'er thy Gnome could spoil a grace,  
Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,  
Like citron-waters, matrons' cheeks inflame,  
Or change complexions at a losing game;  
If e'er with airy horns I planted heads,  
Or rumpled petticoats, or tumbled beds,  
Or caused suspicion when no soul was rude,  
Or discomposed the head-dress of a prude,  
Or e'er to costive lap-dogs gave disease,  
Which not the tears of brightest eyes could ease:  
Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin:  
That single act gives half the world the spleen."

The goddess with a discontented air  
Seems to reject him, though she grants his prayer.  
A wondrous bag with both her hands she binds,  
Like that where once Ulysses held the winds;  
There she collects the force of female lungs,  
Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues.  
A vial next she fills with fainting fears,  
Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.  
The Gnome rejoicing bears her gifts away,  
Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.

Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found,  
Her eyes dejected, and her hair unbound.  
Full o'er their heads the swelling bag he rent,  
And all the furies issued at the vent.  
Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,  
And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire.  
"O wretched maid!" she spread her hands, and cried  
(While Hampton's echoes, "wretched maid!" replied),  
"Was it for this you took such constant care  
The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?"



For this your locks in paper durance bound?  
 For this with torturing irons wreathed around?  
 For this with fillets strain'd your tender head,  
 And bravely bore the double loads of lead?  
 Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,  
 While the fops envy, and the ladies stare?  
 Honour forbid! at whose unrival'd shrine  
 Ease, pleasure, virtue, all our sex resign.  
 Methinks already I your tears survey,  
 Already hear the horrid things they say,  
 Already see you a degraded toast,  
 And all your honour in a whisper lost!  
 How shall I, then, your hapless fame defend?  
 'T will then be infamy to seem your friend!  
 And shall this prize, the inestimable prize,  
 Exposed through crystal to the gazing eyes,  
 And heighten'd by the diamond's circling rays,  
 On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?  
 Sooner shall grass in Hyde-park circus grow,  
 And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow!  
 Sooner let air, earth, sea, to chaos fall,  
 Men, monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots, perish all!"

She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,  
 And bids her beau demand the precious hairs  
 (Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,  
 And the nice conduct of a clouded cane):  
 With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face,  
 He first the snuff-box open'd, then the case,  
 And thus broke out: — "My Lord, why, what the devil?  
 Z—ds! damn the lock; 'fore Gad, you must be civil!  
 Plague on't, 't is past a jest — nay pr'ythee, pox!  
 Give her the hair," — he spoke, and rapp'd his box.

"It grieves me much (replied the peer again)  
 Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain;  
 But by this lock, this sacred lock, I swear  
 (Which never more shall join its parted hair;  
 Which never more its honours shall renew,



Clipp'd from the lovely head where late it grew)  
That while my nostrils draw the vital air,  
This hand, which won it, shall for ever wear."  
He spoke, and speaking, in proud triumph spread  
The long-contended honours of her head.

But Umbriel, hateful Gnome! forbears not so;  
He breaks the vial whence the sorrows flow.  
Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,  
Her eyes half-languishing, half-drown'd in tears;  
On her heaved bosom hung her drooping head,  
Which, with a sigh, she raised; and thus she said:

"For ever cursed be this detested day,  
Which snatch'd my best, my favourite curl away.  
Happy! ah ten times happy had I been,  
If Hampton-Court these eyes had never seen!  
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid  
By love of courts to numerous ills betray'd.  
Oh had I rather unadmired remain'd  
In some lone isle, or distant northern land;  
Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,  
Where none learn ombre, none e'er taste bohea!  
There kept my charms conceal'd from mortal eye,  
Like roses, that in deserts bloom and die.  
What moved my mind with youthful lords to roam?  
Oh had I staid, and said my prayers at home!  
'T was this, the morning omens seem'd to tell;  
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;  
The tottering china shook without a wind,  
Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!  
A Sylph too warn'd me of the threats of fate,  
In mystic visions, now believed too late!  
See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!  
My hand shall rend what e'en thy rapine spares:  
These in two sable ringlets taught to break,  
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;  
The sister-lock now sits uncouth, alone,  
And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;



Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal shears demands,  
 And tempts, once more, thy sacrilegious hands.  
 Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize  
 Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!"

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## CANTO V.

SHE said; the pitying audience melt in tears;  
 But Fate and Jove had stopp'd the baron's ears.  
 In vain Thalestris with reproach assails,  
 For who can move when fair Belinda fails?  
 Not half so fix'd the Trojan could remain,  
 While Anna begg'd, and Dido raged in vain.  
 Then grave Clarissa graceful waved her fan;  
 Silence ensued, and thus the nymph began:

"Say, why are beauties praised and honour'd most,  
 The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?  
 Why deck'd with all that land and sea afford?  
 Why angels call'd, and angel-like adored?  
 Why round our coaches crowd the white-gloved beaux?  
 Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?  
 How vain are all these glories, all our pains,  
 Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains:  
 That men may say, when we the front-box grace,  
 Behold the first in virtue as in face!  
 Oh! if to dance all night and dress all day,  
 Charm'd the small-pox, or chased old age away,  
 Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce,  
 Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?  
 To patch, nay ogle, may become a saint;  
 Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.  
 But since, alas! frail beauty must decay;  
 Curl'd or uncurl'd, since locks will turn to grey;  
 Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,  
 And she who scorns a man must die a maid;  
 What then remains but well our power to use,



While through the press enraged Thalestris flies,  
And scatters death around from both her eyes,  
A beau and witling perish'd in the throng,  
One died in metaphor, and one in song.  
"O cruel nymph! a living death I bear,"  
Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair.  
A mournful glance Sir Fopling upwards cast;  
"Those eyes are made so killing —" was his last.  
Thus on Mæander's flowery margin lies  
The expiring swan, and as he sings he dies.





When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,  
Chloe stepp'd in, and kill'd him with a frown;  
She smiled to see the doughty hero slain,  
But, at her smile, the beau revived again.

Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,  
Weighs the men's wits against the lady's hair;  
The doubtful beam long nods from side to side;  
At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.

See fierce Belinda on the baron flies,  
With more than usual lightning in her eyes:  
Nor fear'd the chief the unequal fight to try,  
Who sought no more than on his foe to die.  
But this bold lord, with manly strength endued,  
She with one finger and a thumb subdued:  
Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,  
A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw;  
The Gnomes direct, to every atom just,  
The pungent grains of titillating dust.  
Sudden with starting tears each eye o'erflows,  
And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.

"Now meet thy fate," incensed Belinda cried,  
And drew a deadly bodkin from her side  
(The same, his ancient personage to deck,  
Her great-great-grandsire wore about his neck,  
In three seal-rings; which after, melted down,  
Form'd a vast buckle for his widow's gown:  
Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,  
The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew;  
Then in a bodkin graced her mother's hairs,  
Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears).

"Boast not my fall," he cried, "insulting foe!  
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.  
Nor think, to die dejects my lofty mind:  
All that I dread is leaving you behind!  
Rather than so, ah let me still survive,  
And burn in Cupid's flames — but burn alive."



"Restore the lock," she cries; and all around,  
 "Restore the lock!" the vaulted roofs rebound.  
 Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain  
 Roar'd for the handkerchief that caused his pain.  
 But see how oft ambitious aims are cross'd,  
 And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost!  
 The lock, obtain'd with guilt, and kept with pain,  
 In every place is sought, but sought in vain:  
 With such a prize no mortal must be bless'd:  
 So Heaven decrees! with Heaven who can contest?

Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,  
 Since all things lost on earth are treasured there.  
 There heroes' wits are kept in ponderous vases,  
 And beaux in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases:  
 There broken vows and death-bed alms are found,  
 And lovers' hearts with ends of riband bound;  
 The courtiers' promises, and sick-man's prayers,  
 The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,  
 Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,  
 Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.

But trust the muse — she saw it upward rise,  
 Though mark'd by none but quick poetic eyes;  
 (So Rome's great founder to the heavens withdrew,  
 To Proculus alone confess'd in view):  
 A sudden star, it shot through liquid air,  
 And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.  
 Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,  
 The heavens bespangling with dishevell'd light.  
 The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,  
 And pleased pursue its progress through the skies.

This the beau-monde shall from the Mall survey,  
 And hail with music its propitious ray.  
 This the bless'd lover shall for Venus take,  
 And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake.  
 This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,  
 When next he looks through Galileo's eyes;



And hence the egregious wizzard shall foredoom  
The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.

Then cease, bright nymph! to mourn thy ravish'd hair,  
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!  
Not all the tresses that fair head can boast,  
Shall draw such envy as the lock you lost.  
For, after all the murders of your eye,  
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die;  
When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,  
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,  
This lock, the muse shall consecrate to fame,  
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

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# ELEGY

TO THE

## MEMORY OF AN UNFORTUNATE LADY.

WHAT beckoning ghost, along the moonlight shade,  
Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?  
'T is she! — but why that bleeding bosom gored?  
Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?  
Oh ever beauteous, ever friendly! tell,  
Is it, in heaven, a crime to love too well?  
To bear too tender, or too firm a heart?  
To act a lover's or a Roman's part?  
Is there no bright reversion in the sky,  
For those who greatly think, or bravely die?

Why bade ye else, ye powers! her soul aspire  
Above the vulgar flight of low desire?  
Ambition first sprung from your bless'd abodes:  
The glorious fault of angels and of gods:  
Thence to their images on earth it flows,  
And in the breasts of kings and heroes glows.  
Most souls, 't is true, but peep out once an age,  
Dull sullen prisoners in the body's cage;  
Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years,  
Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres;  
Like eastern kings a lazy state they keep,  
And, close confined to their own palace, sleep.

From these perhaps (ere nature bade her die)  
Fate snatch'd her early to the pitying sky.  
As into air the purer spirits flow,  
And separate from their kindred dregs below;  
So flew the soul to its congenial place,  
Nor left one virtue to redeem her race.



But thou, false guardian of a charge too good,  
Thou mean deserter of thy brother's blood!  
See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,  
These cheeks now fading at the blast of death;  
Cold is that breast which warm'd the world before,  
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more.  
Thus, if eternal justice rules the ball,  
Thus shall your wives, and thus your children fall:  
On all the line a sudden vengeance waits,  
And frequent hearses shall besiege your gates:  
There passengers shall stand, and pointing say  
(While the long funerals blacken all the way),  
"Lo! these were they, whose souls the furies steel'd,  
And cursed with hearts unknowing how to yield."  
Thus unlamented pass the proud away,  
The gaze of fools, and pageant of a day!  
So perish all, whose breast ne'er learn'd to glow  
For others' good, or melt at others' woe.

What can atone (oh ever-injured shade!)  
Thy fate unpitied, and thy rites unpaid?  
No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear  
Pleased thy pale ghost, or graced thy mournful bier:  
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were closed,  
By foreign hands thy decent limbs composed,  
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorn'd,  
By strangers honour'd, and by strangers mourn'd!  
What though no friends in sable weeds appear,  
Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a year,  
And bear about the mockery of woe  
To midnight dances, and the public show?  
What though no weeping loves thy ashes grace,  
Nor polish'd marble emulate thy face?  
What though no sacred earth allow thee room,  
Nor hallow'd dirge be mutter'd o'er thy tomb?  
Yet shall thy grave with rising flowers be dress'd  
And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast:  
There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,



There the first roses of the year shall blow;  
 While angels with their silver wings o'ershade  
 The ground now sacred by thy reliques made.

So, peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,  
 What once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fame.  
 How loved, how honour'd once, avails thee not,  
 To whom related, or by whom begot;  
 A heap of dust alone remains of thee,  
 'T is all thou art, and all the proud shall be!

Poets themselves must fall, like those they sung,  
 Deaf the praised ear, and mute the tuneful tongue.  
 E'en he, whose soul now melts in mournful lays,  
 Shall shortly want the generous tear he pays;  
 Then from his closing eyes thy form shall part,  
 And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart,  
 Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,  
 The muse forgot, and thou beloved no more!

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## PROLOGUE

*To Mr. Addison's Tragedy of Cato.*

To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,  
 To raise the genius, and to mend the heart;  
 To make mankind in conscious virtue bold,  
 Live o'er each scene, and be what they behold:  
 For this the Tragic Muse first trod the stage,  
 Commanding tears to stream through every age;  
 Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,  
 And foes to virtue wonder'd how they wept.

Our author shuns by vulgar springs to move  
 The hero's glory, or the virgin's love;  
 In pitying love, we but our weakness show,  
 And wild ambition well deserves its woe.  
 Here tears shall flow from a more generous cause,  
 Such tears as patriots shed for dying laws:



He bids your breasts with ancient ardour rise,  
And calls forth Roman drops from British eyes.  
Virtue confess'd in human shape he draws,  
What Plato thought, and godlike Cato was:  
No common object to your sight displays,  
But what with pleasure Heaven itself surveys,  
A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,  
And greatly falling with a falling state.  
While Cato gives his little senate laws,  
What bosom beats not in his country's cause?  
Who sees him act, but envies every deed?  
Who hears him groan, and does not wish to bleed?  
E'en when proud Cæsar, 'midst triumphal cars,  
The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,  
Ignobly vain, and impotently great,  
Show'd Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state;  
As her dead father's reverend image pass'd,  
The pomp was darken'd, and the day o'ercast;  
The triumph ceased, tears gush'd from every eye;  
The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by;  
Her last good man dejected Rome adored,  
And honour'd Cæsar's less than Cato's sword.

Britons, attend: be worth like this approved,  
And show, you have the virtue to be moved.  
With honest scorn the first famed Cato view'd  
Rome learning arts from Greece, whom she subdued:  
Your scene precariously subsists too long  
On French translation, and Italian song.  
Dare to have sense yourselves; assert the stage,  
Be justly warm'd with your own native rage:  
Such plays alone should win a British ear,  
As Cato's self had not disdain'd to hear.

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## EPILOGUE

TO MR. ROWE'S JANE SHORE

*Designed for Mrs. Oldfield.*

PRODIGIOUS this! the frail-one of our play  
From her own sex should mercy find to-day!  
You might have held the pretty head aside,  
Peep'd in your fans, been serious, thus, and cried,  
"The play may pass — but that strange creature Shore,  
I can't — indeed now — I so hate a whore! —"  
Just as a blockhead rubs his thoughtless skull,  
And thanks his stars he was not born a fool;  
So from a sister sinner you shall hear,  
"How strangely you expose yourself my dear!"  
But let me die, all raillery apart,  
Our sex are still forgiving at their heart;  
And, did not wicked custom so contrive,  
We'd be the best, good-natured things alive.

There are, 't is true, who tell another tale,  
That virtuous ladies envy while they rail;  
Such rage without betrays the fire within;  
In some close corner of the soul, they sin;  
Still hoarding up, most scandalously nice,  
Amidst their virtues a reserve of vice.  
The godly dame, who fleshly failings damns,  
Scolds with her maid, or with her chaplain crams.  
Would you enjoy soft nights and solid dinners?  
Faith, gallants, board with saints, and bed with sinners.

Well, if our author in the wife offends,  
He has a husband that will make amends:  
He draws him gentle, tender, and forgiving,  
And sure such kind good creatures may be living.  
In days of old they pardon'd breach of vows,  
Stern Cato's self was no relentless spouse:  
Plu — Plutarch, what's his name, that writes his life?  
Tells us, that Cato dearly loved his wife:



Yet if a friend, a night or so, should need her,  
He'd recommend her as a special breeder.  
To lend a wife, few here would scruple make;  
But, pray, which of you all would take her back?  
Though with the stoic chief our stage may ring,  
The stoic husband was the glorious thing.  
The man had courage, was a sage, 't is true,  
And loved his country — but what's that to you?  
Those strange examples ne'er were made to fit ye,  
But the kind cuckold might instruct the city:  
There many a honest man may copy Cato,  
Who ne'er saw naked sword, or look'd in Plato.

If, after all, you think it a disgrace,  
That Edward's miss thus perks it in your face;  
To see a piece of failing flesh and blood,  
In all the rest so impudently good;  
Faith, let the modest matrons of the town  
Come here in crowds, and stare the strumpet down.

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## ELOISA TO ABELARD.

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### ARGUMENT.

Abelard and Eloïsa flourished in the twelfth century; they were two of the most distinguished persons of their age in learning and beauty, but for nothing more famous than for their unfortunate passion. After a long course of calamities they retired each to a several convent, and consecrated the remainder of their days to religion. It was many years after this separation, that a letter of Abelard's to a friend, which contained the history of his misfortune, fell into the hands of Eloïsa. This awakening all her tenderness, occasioned those celebrated letters (out of which the following is partly extracted) which give so lively a picture of the struggles of grace and nature, virtue and passion.

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### ELOISA TO ABELARD.

In these deep solitudes and awful cells,  
Where heavenly-pensive contemplation dwells,  
And ever-musing melancholy reigns;  
What means this tumult in a vestal's veins?  
Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat?  
Why feels my heart its long-forgotten heat?  
Yet, yet I love! — From Abelard it came,  
And Eloïsa yet must kiss the name.

Dear fatal name! rest ever unreveal'd,  
Nor pass these lips, in holy silence seal'd;  
Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,  
Where, mix'd with God's, his loved idea lies:  
O, write it not, my hand — the name appears  
Already written — wash it out, my tears!  
In vain lost Eloïsa weeps and prays;  
Her heart still dictates, and her hand obeys.



Relentless walls! whose darksome round contains  
Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains:  
Ye rugged rocks! which holy knees have worn;  
Ye grotts and caverns shagg'd with horrid thorn;  
Shrines! where their vigils pale-eyed virgins keep;  
And pitying saints, whose statues learn to weep!  
Though cold like you, unmoved and silent grown,  
I have not yet forgot myself to stone.

All is not Heaven's while Abelard has part;  
Still rebel nature holds out half my heart;  
Nor prayers nor fasts its stubborn pulse restrain,  
Nor tears for ages thought to flow in vain.

Soon as thy letters trembling I uncloze,  
That well-known name awakens all my woes;  
Oh, name for ever sad! for ever dear!  
Still breathed in sighs, still usher'd with a tear.  
I tremble too, where'er my own I find,  
Some dire misfortune follows close behind.  
Line after line my gushing eyes o'erflow,  
Led through a sad variety of woe:  
Now warm in love, now withering in my bloom,  
Lost in a convent's solitary gloom!  
There stern religion quench'd the unwilling flame,  
There died the best of passions, love and fame.

Yet write, oh write me all, that I may join  
Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine.  
Nor foes nor fortune take this power away;  
And is my Abelard less kind than they?  
Tears still are mine, and those I need not spare.  
Love but demands what else were shed in prayer;  
No happier task these faded eyes pursue;  
To read and weep is all they now can do.

Then share thy pain, allow that sad relief;  
Ah, more than share it, give me all thy grief.  
Heaven first taught letters for some wretch's aid,  
Some banish'd lover, or some captive maid;  
They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires,



Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires,  
The virgin's wish without her fears impart,  
Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart,  
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,  
And waft a sigh from Indus to the pole!

Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy flame,  
When love approach'd me under friendship's name;  
My fancy form'd thee of angelic kind,  
Some emanation of the All-beauteous Mind.  
Those smiling eyes, attempering every ray,  
Shone sweetly lambent with celestial day.  
Guiltless I gazed; Heaven listen'd while you sung;  
And truths divine came mended from that tongue.  
From lips like those what precept fail'd to move?  
Too soon they taught me 't was no sin to love:  
Back through the paths of pleasing sense I ran,  
Nor wish'd an angel whom I loved a man.  
Dim and remote the joys of saints I see,  
Nor envy them that heaven I lose for thee.

How oft, when press'd to marriage, have I said,  
Curse on all laws but those which love has made!  
Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,  
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.  
Let wealth, let honour, wait the wedded dame,  
August her deed, and sacred be her fame;  
Before true passion all those views remove;  
Fame, wealth, and honour! what are you to love?  
The jealous god, when we profane his fires,  
Those restless passions in revenge inspires,  
And bids them make mistaken mortals groan,  
Who seek in love for aught but love alone.  
Should at my feet the world's great master fall,  
Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn them all:  
Not Cæsar's empress would I deign to prove;  
No, make me mistress to the man I love,  
If there be yet another name more free,  
More fond than mistress, make me that to thee!



Oh, happy state! when souls each other draw,  
When love is liberty, and nature law:  
All then is full, possessing and possess'd,  
No craving void left aching in the breast:  
E'en thought meets thought, ere from the lips it part,  
And each warm wish springs mutual from the heart  
This sure is bliss (if bliss on earth there be)  
And once the lot of Abelard and me.

Alas, how changed! what sudden horrors rise!  
A naked lover bound and bleeding lies!  
Where, where was Eloïse? her voice, her hand,  
Her poniard had opposed the dire command.  
Barbarian, stay! that bloody stroke restrain:  
The crime was common, common be the pain.  
I can no more; by shame, by rage suppress'd,  
Let tears and burning blushes speak the rest.

Canst thou forget that sad, that solemn day,  
When victims at yon altar's foot we lay?  
Canst thou forget what tears that moment fell,  
When, warm in youth, I bade the world farewell?  
As with cold lips I kiss'd the sacred veil,  
The shrines all trembled, and the lamps grew pale:  
Heaven scarce believed the conquest it survey'd,  
And saints with wonder heard the vows I made.  
Yet then, to those dread altars as I drew,  
Not on the cross my eyes were fix'd, but you:  
Not grace, or zeal, love only was my call;  
And if I lose thy love, I lose my all.  
Come, with thy looks, thy words relieve my woe;  
Those still at least are left thee to bestow.  
Still on that breast enamour'd let me lie,  
Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,  
Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press'd;  
Give all thou canst — and let me dream the rest.  
Ah, no! instruct me other joys to prize,  
With other beauties charm my partial eyes,



Full in my view set all the bright abode,  
And make my soul quit Abelard for God.

Ah! think at least thy flock deserves thy care,  
Plants of thy hand, and children of thy prayer.  
From the false world in early youth they fled,  
By thee to mountains, wilds, and deserts led.  
You raised these hallow'd walls; the desert smiled,  
And paradise was open'd in the wild.  
No weeping orphan saw his father's stores  
Our shrines irradiate, or emblaze the floors;  
No silver saints, by dying misers given,  
Here bribe the rage of ill-requited Heaven;  
But such plain roofs as piety could raise,  
And only vocal with the Maker's praise.  
In these lone walls (their day's eternal bound)  
These moss-grown domes with spiry turrets crown'd,  
Where awful arches make a noon-day night,  
And the dim windows shed a solemn light;  
Thy eyes diffused a reconciling ray,  
And gleams of glory brighten'd all the day.  
But now no face divine contentment wears;  
'T is all blank sadness, or continual tears.  
See how the force of others' prayers I try,  
(Oh pious fraud of amorous charity!)  
But why should I on others' prayers depend?  
Come thou, my father, brother, husband, friend!  
Ah, let thy handmaid, sister, daughter, move,  
And all those tender names in one, thy love!  
The darksome pines that o'er yon rocks reclined,  
Wave high, and murmur to the hollow wind,  
The wandering streams that shine between the hills,  
The grotts that echo to the tinkling rills,  
The dying gales that pant upon the trees,  
The lakes that quiver to the curling breeze;  
No more these scenes my meditation aid,  
Or lull to rest the visionary maid:  
But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,



Long-sounding aisles, and intermingled graves,  
Black melancholy sits, and round her throws  
A death-like silence, and a dread repose;  
Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,  
Shades every flower, and darkens every green,  
Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,  
And breathes a browner horror on the woods.

Yet here for ever, ever must I stay;  
Sad proof how well a lover can obey!  
Death, only death, can break the lasting chain;  
And here, e'en then, shall my cold dust remain:  
Here all its frailties, all its flames resign,  
And wait till 't is no sin to mix with thine.

Ah, wretch! believed the spouse of God in vain,  
Confess'd within the slave of love and man.  
Assist me, Heaven! but whence arose that prayer?  
Sprung it from piety, or from despair?  
E'en here, where frozen chastity retires,  
Love finds an altar for forbidden fires,  
I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought;  
I mourn the lover, not lament the fault;  
I view my crime, but kindle at the view,  
Repent old pleasures, and solicit new;  
Now turn'd to heaven, I weep my past offence,  
Now think of thee, and curse my innocence.  
Of all affliction taught a lover yet,  
'T is sure the hardest science to forget!  
How shall I lose the sin, yet keep the sense,  
And love the offender, yet detest the offence?  
How the dear object from the crime remove,  
Or how distinguish penitence from love?  
Unequal task! a passion to resign,  
For hearts so touch'd, so pierced, so lost as mine!  
Ere such a soul regains its peaceful state,  
How often must it love, how often hate!  
How often hope, despair, resent, regret,  
Conceal, disdain — do all things but forget!



But let heaven seize it, all at once 't is fired:  
Not touch'd, but rapt; not waken'd, but inspired!  
Oh come! oh teach me nature to subdue,  
Renounce my love, my life, myself — and you.  
Fill my fond heart with God alone, for he  
Alone can rival, can succeed to thee.

How happy is the blameless vestal's lot;  
The world forgetting, by the world forgot!  
Eternal sun-shine of the spotless mind;  
Each prayer accepted, and each wish resign'd;  
Labour and rest that equal periods keep;  
"Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep;"  
Desires composed, affections ever even;  
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven.  
Grace shines around her with serenest beams,  
And whispering angels prompt her golden dreams.  
For her the unfading rose of Eden blooms,  
And wings of seraphs shed divine perfumes;  
For her the spouse prepares the bridal ring;  
For her white virgins hymenæals sing;  
To sounds of heavenly harps she dies away,  
And melts in visions of eternal day.

Far other dreams my erring soul employ,  
Far other raptures of unholy joy:  
When, at the close of each sad sorrowing day,  
Fancy restores what vengeance snatch'd away,  
Then conscience sleeps, and leaving nature free,  
All my loose soul unbounded springs to thee.  
O curst, dear horrors of all-conscious night!  
How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight!  
Provoking demons all restraint remove,  
And stir within me every source of love.  
I hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy charms,  
And round thy phantom glue my clasping arms.  
I wake: — no more I hear, no more I view,  
The phantom flies me, as unkind as you.  
I call aloud; it hears not what I say:



I stretch my empty arms; it glides away.  
To dream once more, I close my willing eyes:  
Ye soft illusions, dear deceits, arise!  
Alas, no more! methinks we wandering go  
Through dreary wastes, and weep each other's woe,  
Where round some mouldering tower pale ivy creeps,  
And low-brow'd rocks hang nodding o'er the deeps.  
Sudden you mount, you beckon from the skies;  
Clouds interpose, waves roar, and winds arise.  
I shriek, start up, the same sad prospect find,  
And wake to all the griefs I left behind.

For thee the Fates, severely kind, ordain  
A cool suspense from pleasure and from pain;  
Thy life a long dead calm of fix'd repose;  
No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows.  
Still as the sea, ere winds were taught to blow,  
Or moving spirit bade the waters flow;  
Soft as the slumbers of a saint forgiven,  
And mild as opening gleams of promised heaven.

Come, Abelard! for what hast thou to dread?  
The torch of Venus burns not for the dead.  
Nature stands check'd; religion disapproves;  
E'en thou art cold — yet Eloïsa loves.  
Ah, hopeless, lasting flames! like those that burn  
To light the dead, and warm the unfruitful urn.

What scenes appear where'er I turn my view!  
The dear ideas, where I fly, pursue,  
Rise in the grove, before the altar rise,  
Stain all my soul, and wanton in my eyes.  
I waste the matin lamp in sighs for thee,  
Thy image steals between my God and me,  
Thy voice I seem in every hymn to hear,  
With every bead I drop too soft a tear.  
When from the censer clouds of fragrance roll,  
And swelling organs lift the rising soul,  
One thought of thee puts all the pomp to flight,  
Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my sight:



In seas of flame my plunging soul is drown'd,  
While altars blaze, and angels tremble round.

While prostrate here in humble grief I lie,  
Kind, virtuous drops just gathering in my eye,  
While, praying, trembling, in the dust I roll,  
And dawning grace is opening on my soul:  
Come, if thou darest, all-charming as thou art;  
Oppose thyself to Heaven; dispute my heart;  
Come, with one glance of those deluding eyes  
Blot out each bright idea of the skies;  
Take back that grace, those sorrows, and those tears;  
Take back my fruitless penitence and prayers;  
Snatch me, just mounting, from the bless'd abode;  
Assist the fiends, and tear me from my God!

No, fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole;  
Rise Alps between us! and whole oceans roll!  
Ah, come not, write not, think not once of me,  
Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee.  
Thy oaths I quit, thy memory resign;  
Forget, renounce me, hate whate'er was mine.  
Fair eyes, and tempting looks (which yet I view!)  
Long loved, adored ideas, all adieu!  
O grace serene! O virtue heavenly fair!  
Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care!  
Fresh-blooming hope, gay daughter of the sky!  
And faith, our early immortality!  
Enter, each mild, each amiable guest;  
Receive and wrap me in eternal rest!

See in her cell sad Eloïsa spread,  
Propp'd on some tomb, a neighbour of the dead.  
In each low wind methinks a spirit calls,  
And more than echoes talk along the walls.  
Here, as I watch'd the dying lamp around,  
From yonder shrine I heard a hollow sound:  
"Come, sister, come!" it said, or seem'd to say,  
"Thy place is here; sad sister, come away!  
Once like thyself, I trembled, wept, and pray'd,



Love's victim then, though now a sainted maid:  
But all is calm in this eternal sleep;  
Here grief forgets to groan, and love to weep:  
E'en superstition loses every fear;  
For God, not man, absolves our frailties here."

I come, I come! prepare your roseate bowers,  
Celestial palms, and ever-blooming flowers;  
Thither, where sinners may have rest, I go,  
Where flames refined in breasts seraphic glow:  
Thou, Abelard! the last sad office pay,  
And smooth my passage to the realms of day;  
See my lips tremble, and my eye-balls roll,  
Suck my last breath, and catch my flying soul!  
Ah, no — in sacred vestments mayst thou stand,  
The hallow'd taper trembling in thy hand,  
Present the cross before my lifted eye,  
Teach me at once, and learn of me to die.  
Ah, then thy once-loved Eloïsa see!  
It will be then no crime to gaze on me.  
See from my cheek the transient roses fly!  
See the last sparkle languish in my eye!  
Till every motion, pulse, and breath be o'er;  
And e'en my Abelard be loved no more.  
O Death all eloquent! you only prove  
What dust we dote on, when 't is man we love.

Then too, when fate shall thy fair frame destroy  
(That cause of all my guilt, and all my joy),  
In trance ecstatic may thy pangs be drown'd,  
Bright clouds descend, and angels watch thee round,  
From opening skies may streaming glories shine,  
And saints embrace thee with a love like mine!

May one kind grave unite each hapless name,  
And graft my love immortal on thy fame!  
Then, ages hence, when all my woes are o'er,  
When this rebellious heart shall beat no more;  
If ever chance two wandering lovers brings  
To Paraclete's white walls and silver springs,



O'er the pale marble shall they join their heads,  
And drink the falling tears each other sheds;  
Then sadly say, with mutual pity moved,  
"O, may we never love as these have loved!"  
From the full choir, when loud hosannas rise,  
And swell the pomp of dreadful sacrifice,  
Amid that scene if some relenting eye  
Glance on the stone where our cold relics lie,  
Devotion's self shall steal a thought from heaven,  
One human tear shall drop, and be forgiven.

And sure if fate some future bard shall join  
In sad similitude of griefs to mine,  
Condemn'd whole years in absence to deplore,  
And image charms he must behold no more;  
Such, if there be, who loves so long, so well;  
Let him our sad, our tender story tell!  
The well-sung woes will soothe my pensive ghost;  
He best can paint them who shall feel them most!

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# THE TEMPLE OF FAME.

*Written in the Year 1711.*

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

The hint of the following piece was taken from Chaucer's House of Fame. The design is in a manner entirely altered, the descriptions and most of the particular thoughts my own; yet I could not suffer it to be printed without this acknowledgment. The reader who would compare this with Chaucer, may begin with his third book of Fame, there being nothing in the first two books that answers to their title.

The poem is introduced in the manner of the Provençal poets, whose works were for the most part visions, or pieces of imagination, and constantly descriptive. From these, Petrarch and Chaucer frequently borrowed the idea of their poems. See the Trionfi of the former, and the Dream, Flower and the Leaf, &c. of the latter. The author of this, therefore, chose the same sort of exordium.

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## THE TEMPLE OF FAME.

In that soft season, when descending showers  
Call forth the greens, and wake the rising flowers;  
When opening buds salute the welcome day,  
And earth relenting feels the genial ray;  
As balmy sleep had charm'd my cares to rest,  
And love itself was banish'd from my breast,  
(What time the morn mysterious visions brings,  
While purer slumbers spread their golden wings),  
A train of phantoms in wild order rose,  
And, join'd, this intellectual scene compose.

I stood, methought, betwixt earth, seas, and skies;  
The whole creation open to my eyes;



In air, self-balanced hung the globe below,  
Where mountains rise, and circling oceans flow:  
Here naked rocks, and empty wastes were seen;  
There towering cities, and the forests green:  
Here sailing ships delight the wandering eyes;  
There trees and intermingled temples rise:  
Now a clear sun the shining scene displays;  
The transient landscape now in clouds decays.

O'er the wide prospect as I gazed around,  
Sudden I heard a wild promiscuous sound,  
Like broken thunders that at distance roar,  
Or billows murmuring on the hollow shore:  
Then gazing up, a glorious pile beheld,  
Whose towering summit ambient clouds conceal'd.  
High on a rock of ice the structure lay,  
Steep its ascent, and slippery was the way:  
The wondrous rock like Parian marble shone,  
And seem'd, to distant sight, of solid stone.  
Inscriptions here of various names I view'd,  
The greater part by hostile time subdued;  
Yet wide was spread their fame in ages past,  
And poets once had promised they should last.  
Some fresh engraved appear'd of wits renown'd;  
I look'd again, nor could their trace be found.  
Critics I saw, that other names deface,  
And fix their own, with labour, in their place:  
Their own, like others, soon their place resign'd,  
Or disappear'd, and left the first behind.  
Nor was the work impair'd by storms alone,  
But felt the approaches of too warm a sun;  
For Fame, impatient of extremes, decays  
Not more by envy, than excess of praise.  
Yet part no injuries of heaven could feel,  
Like crystal faithful to the graving steel:  
The rock's high summit, in the temple's shade,  
Nor heat could melt, nor beating storm invade.  
Their names inscribed unnumber'd ages past



From time's first birth, with time itself shall last;  
These ever new, nor subject to decays,  
Spread and grow brighter with the length of days.

So Zembla's rocks (the beauteous work of frost)  
Rise white in air, and glitter o'er the coast;  
Pale suns, unfelt, at distance roll away,  
And on the impassive ice the lightnings play;  
Eternal snows the growing mass supply,  
Till the bright mountains prop the incumbent sky;  
As Atlas fix'd, each hoary pile appears,  
The gather'd winter of a thousand years.  
On this foundation Fame's high temple stands;  
Stupendous pile! not rear'd by mortal hands.  
Whate'er proud Rome or artful Greece beheld,  
Or elder Babylon, its frame excell'd.  
Four faces had the dome, and every face  
Of various structure, but of equal grace!  
Four brazen gates, on columns lifted high,  
Salute the different quarters of the sky.  
Here fabled chiefs in darker ages born,  
Or worthies old, whom arms or arts adorn,  
Who cities raised, or tamed a monstrous race,  
The walls in venerable order grace:  
Heroes in animated marble frown,  
And legislators seem to think in stone.

Westward, a sumptuous frontispiece appear'd,  
On Doric pillars of white marble rear'd,  
Crown'd with an architrave of antique mould,  
And sculpture rising on the roughen'd gold.  
In shaggy spoils here Theseus was beheld,  
And Perseus dreadful with Minerva's shield:  
There great Alcides, stooping with his toil,  
Rests on his club, and holds the Hesperian spoil:  
Here Orpheus sings; trees moving to the sound  
Start from their roots, and form a shade around:  
Amphion there the loud creating lyre  
Strikes, and behold a sudden Thebes aspire!



Cythæron's echoes answer to his call,  
And half the mountain rolls into a wall:  
There might you see the lengthening spires ascend,  
The domes swell up, the widening arches bend,  
The growing towers like exhalations rise,  
And the huge columns heave into the skies.

The eastern front was glorious to behold,  
With diamond flaming, and Barbaric gold.  
There Ninus shone, who spread the Assyrian fame,  
And the great founder of the Persian name:  
There in long robes the royal Magi stand,  
Grave Zoroaster waves the circling wand:  
The sage Chaldæans robed in white appear'd,  
And Brachmans, deep in desert woods revered.  
These stopp'd the moon, and call'd the unbodied shades  
To midnight banquets in the glimmering glades;  
Made visionary fabrics round them rise,  
And airy spectres skim before their eyes;  
Of talismans and sigils knew the power,  
And careful watch'd the planetary hour.  
Superior, and alone, Confucius stood,  
Who taught that useful science — to be good.

But on the south, a long majestic race  
Of Egypt's priests the gilded niches grace,  
Who measured earth, described the starry spheres,  
And traced the long records of lunar years.  
High on his car Sesostris struck my view,  
Whom scepter'd slaves in golden harness drew:  
His hands a bow and pointed javelin hold;  
His giant limbs are arm'd in scales of gold.  
Between the statues obelisks were placed,  
And the learn'd walls with hieroglyphics graced.

Of Gothic structure was the northern side,  
O'erwrought with ornaments of barbarous pride.  
There huge Colosses rose, with trophies crown'd,  
And Runic characters were graved around.  
There sat Zamolxis with erected eyes,



And Odin here in mimic trances dies.  
There on rude iron columns, smear'd with blood,  
The horrid forms of Scythian heroes stood:  
Druids and Bards (their once loud harps unstrung)  
And youths that died to be by poets sung.  
These and a thousand more of doubtful fame,  
To whom old fables gave a lasting name,  
In ranks adorn'd the temple's outward face;  
The wall in lustre and effect like glass,  
Which, o'er each object casting various dyes,  
Enlarges some, and others multiplies:  
Nor void of emblem was the mystic wall,  
For thus romantic Fame increases all.

The temple shakes, the sounding gates unfold,  
Wide vaults appear, and roofs of fretted gold:  
Raised on a thousand pillars wreathed around  
With laurel-foliage, and with eagles crown'd:  
Of bright transparent beryl were the walls,  
The friezes gold, and gold the capitals:  
As heaven with stars, the roof with jewels glows,  
And ever-living lamps depend in rows.  
Full in the passage of each spacious gate.  
The sage historians in white garments wait;  
Graved o'er their seats the form of Time was found,  
His scythe reversed, and both his pinions bound.  
Within stood heroes, who through loud alarms  
In bloody fields pursued renown in arms.  
High on a throne with trophies charged, I view'd  
The youth that all things but himself subdued;  
His feet on sceptres and tiaras trod,  
And his horn'd head belied the Libyan god.  
There Cæsar, graced with both Minervas, shone;  
Cæsar, the world's great master, and his own;  
Unmoved, superior still in every state,  
And scarce detested in his country's fate.  
But chief were those, who not for empire fought,  
But with their toils their people's safety bought:



High o'er the rest Epaminondas stood;  
Timoleon, glorious in his brother's blood;  
Bold Scipio, saviour of the Roman state;  
Great in his triumphs, in retirement great;  
And wise Aurelius, in whose well-taught mind  
With boundless power unbounded virtue join'd,  
His own strict judge, and patron of mankind.

Much-suffering heroes next their honours claim,  
Those of less noisy, and less guilty fame,  
Fair virtue's silent train: supreme of these  
Here ever shines the god-like Socrates;  
He whom ungrateful Athens could expel,  
At all times just, but when he sign'd the shell:  
Here his abode the martyr'd Phocion claims,  
With Agis, not the last of Spartan names:  
Unconquer'd Cato shows the wound he tore,  
And Brutus his ill genius meets no more.

But in the centre of the hallow'd choir,  
Six pompous columns o'er the rest aspire;  
Around the shrine itself of Fame they stand,  
Hold the chief honours, and the fane command.  
High on the first, the mighty Homer shone;  
Eternal adamant composed his throne;  
Father of verse! in holy fillets dress'd,  
His silver beard waved gently o'er his breast;  
Though blind, a boldness in his looks appears;  
In years he seem'd, but not impair'd by years.  
The wars of Troy were round the pillars seen:  
Here fierce Tydides wounds the Cyprian queen;  
Here Hector glorious from Patroclus' fall,  
Here dragg'd in triumph round the Trojan wall.  
Motion and life did every part inspire,  
Bold was the work, and proved the master's fire;  
A strong expression most he seem'd to affect,  
And here and there disclosed a brave neglect.

A golden column next in rank appear'd,  
On which a shrine of purest gold was rear'd;



Finish'd the whole, and labour'd every part,  
With patient touches of unwearied art;  
The Mantuan there in sober triumph sate,  
Composed his posture, and his look sedate;  
On Homer still he fix'd a reverent eye,  
Great without pride, in modest majesty.  
In living sculpture on the sides were spread  
The Latian wars, and haughty Turnus dead;  
Eliza stretch'd upon the funeral pyre,  
Æneas bending with his aged sire:  
Troy flamed in burning gold, and o'er the throne  
"Arms and the man" in golden cyphers shone.

Four swans sustain a car of silver bright,  
With heads advanced, and pinions stretch'd for flight:  
Here, like some furious prophet, Pindar rode,  
And seem'd to labour with the inspiring god.  
Across the harp a careless hand he flings,  
And boldly sinks into the sounding strings.  
The figured games of Greece the column grace,  
Neptune and Jove survey the rapid race.  
The youths hang o'er their chariots as they run;  
The fiery steeds seem starting from the stone:  
The champions in distorted postures threat;  
And all appear'd irregularly great.

Here happy Horace tuned the Ausonian lyre  
To sweeter sounds, and temper'd Pindar's fire:  
Pleased with Alcæus' manly rage to infuse  
The softer spirit of the Sapphic muse.  
The polish'd pillar different sculptures grace;  
A work outlasting monumental brass.  
Here smiling Loves and Bacchanals appear,  
The Julian star and great Augustus here.  
The doves that round the infant poet spread  
Myrtles and bays, hung hovering o'er his head.

Here, in a shrine that cast a dazzling light,  
Sate fix'd in thought the mighty Stagyrte;  
His sacred head a radiant zodiac crown'd,



And various animals his sides surround;  
His piercing eyes, erect, appear to view  
Superior worlds, and look all nature through.

With equal rays immortal Tully shone,  
The Roman rostra deck'd the consul's throne:  
Gathering his flowing robe he seem'd to stand  
In act to speak, and graceful stretch'd his hand.  
Behind, Rome's Genius waits with civic crowns,  
And the great father of his country owns.

These massy columns in a circle rise,  
O'er which a pompous dome invades the skies:  
Scarce to the top I stretch'd my aching sight,  
So large it spread, and swell'd to such a height.  
Full in the midst proud Fame's imperial seat  
With jewels blazed, magnificently great;  
The vivid emeralds there revive the eye,  
The flaming rubies show their sanguine dye,  
Bright azure rays from lively sapphires stream,  
And lucid amber casts a golden gleam.  
With various-colour'd light the pavement shone,  
And all on fire appear'd the glowing throne;  
The dome's high arch reflects the mingled blaze,  
And forms a rainbow of alternate rays.  
When on the goddess first I cast my sight,  
Scarce seem'd her stature of a cubit's height;  
But swell'd to larger size the more I gazed,  
Till to the roof her towering front she raised.  
With her, the temple every moment grew,  
And ampler vistas open'd to my view:  
Upward the columns shoot, the roofs ascend,  
And arches widen, and long aisles extend.  
Such was her form, as ancient bards have told,  
Wings raise her arms, and wings her feet infold;  
A thousand busy tongues the goddess bears,  
And thousand open eyes, and thousand listening ears.  
Beneath, in order ranged, the tuneful Nine  
(Her virgin handmaids) still attend the shrine:



With eyes on Fame for ever fix'd, they sing;  
For Fame they raise their voice, and tune the string;  
With Time's first birth began the heavenly lays,  
And last, eternal, through the length of days.

Around these wonders as I cast a look,  
The trumpet sounded, and the temple shook,  
And all the nations, summon'd at the call,  
From different quarters fill the crowded hall:  
Of various tongues the mingled sounds were heard;  
In various garbs promiscuous throngs appear'd;  
Thick as the bees, that with the spring renew  
Their flowery toils, and sip the fragrant dew,  
When the wing'd colonies first tempt the sky,  
O'er dusky fields and shaded waters fly,  
Or, settling, seize the sweets the blossoms yield,  
And a low murmur runs along the field.  
Millions of suppliant crowds the shrine attend,  
And all degrees before the goddess bend;  
The poor, the rich, the valiant, and the sage,  
And boasting youth, and narrative old age.  
Their pleas were different, their request the same;  
For good and bad alike are fond of Fame.  
Some she disgraced, and some with honours crown'd;  
Unlike successes equal merits found.  
Thus her blind sister, fickle Fortune, reigns,  
And undiscerning scatters crowns and chains.

First at the shrine the learned world appear;  
And to the goddess thus prefer their prayer:  
"Long have we sought to instruct and please mankind,  
With studies pale, with midnight vigils blind;  
But thank'd by few, rewarded yet by none,  
We here appeal to thy superior throne:  
On wit and learning the just prize bestow,  
For Fame is all we must expect below."

The goddess heard, and bade the Muses raise  
The golden trumpet of eternal praise:  
From pole to pole the winds diffuse the sound,



That fills the circuit of the world around;  
Not all at once, as thunder breaks the cloud;  
The notes at first were rather sweet than loud:  
By just degrees they every moment rise,  
Fill the wide earth, and gain upon the skies.  
At every breath were balmy odours shed,  
Which still grew sweeter, as they wider spread:  
Less fragrant scents the unfolding rose exhales,  
Or spices breathing in Arabian gales.

Next these the good and just, an awful train,  
Thus on their knees address the sacred fane:  
"Since living virtue is with envy cursed,  
And the best men are treated like the worst,  
Do thou, just goddess, call our merits forth,  
And give each deed the exact intrinsic worth."  
"Not with bare justice shall your act be crown'd,"  
Said Fame, "but high above desert renown'd;  
Let fuller notes the applauding world amaze,  
And the loud clarion labour in your praise."

This band dismiss'd, behold another crowd  
Preferr'd the same request, and lowly bow'd:  
The constant tenour of whose well-spent days  
No less deserved a just return of praise.  
But straight the direful trump of slander sounds;  
Through the big dome the doubling thunder bounds;  
Loud as the burst of cannon rends the skies,  
The dire report through every region flies,  
In every ear incessant rumours rung,  
And gathering scandals grew on every tongue.  
From the black trumpet's rusty concave broke  
Sulphureous flames, and clouds of rolling smoke;  
The poisonous vapour blots the purple skies,  
And withers all before it as it flies.

A troop came next, who crowns and armour wore,  
And proud defiance in their looks they bore:  
"For thee," they cried, "amidst alarms and strife,  
We sail'd in tempests down the stream of life;



For thee whole nations fill'd with flames and blood,  
And swam to empire through the purple flood.  
Those ills we dared, thy inspiration own;  
What virtue seem'd, was done for thee alone."  
"Ambitious fools!" the queen replied, and frown'd,  
"Be all your acts in dark oblivion drown'd;  
There sleep forgot, with mighty tyrants gone,  
Your statues moulder'd, and your names unknown!"  
A sudden cloud straight snatch'd them from my sight,  
And each majestic phantom sunk in night.

Then came the smallest tribe I yet had seen;  
Plain was their dress, and modest was their mien.  
"Great idol of mankind; we neither claim  
The praise of merit, nor aspire to fame!  
But, safe in deserts from the applause of men,  
Would die unheard-of, as we lived unseen.  
'T is all we beg thee, to conceal from sight  
Those acts of goodness which themselves requite.  
O let us still the secret joys partake,  
To follow virtue e'en for virtue's sake."

"And live there men, who slight immortal Fame?  
Who then with incense shall adore our name?  
But, mortals! know, 't is still our greatest pride,  
To blaze those virtues which the good would hide.  
Rise! Muses, rise! add all your tuneful breath;  
These must not sleep in darkness and in death."  
She said: in air the trembling music floats,  
And on the winds triumphant swell the notes;  
So soft, though high, so loud, and yet so clear,  
E'en listening angels lean from heaven to hear:  
To farthest shores the ambrosial spirit flies,  
Sweet to the world, and grateful to the skies.

Next these a youthful train their vows express'd,  
With feathers crown'd, with gay embroidery dress'd:  
"Hither," they cried, "direct your eyes, and see  
The men of pleasure, dress, and gallantry;  
Ours is the place at banquets, balls, and plays;



Sprightly our nights, polite are all our days;  
Courts we frequent, where 't is our pleasing care  
To pay due visits, and address the fair:  
In fact, 't is true, no nymph we could persuade,  
But still in fancy vanquish'd every maid;  
Of unknown duchesses lewd tales we tell,  
Yet, would the world believe us, all were well,  
The joy let others have, and we the name,  
And what we want in pleasure, grant in fame."

The queen assents, the trumpet rends the skies,  
And at each blast a lady's honour dies.

Pleased with the same success, vast numbers press'd  
Around the shrine, and made the same request:  
"What you," she cried, "unlearn'd in arts to please,  
Slaves to yourselves, and e'en fatigued with ease,  
Who lose a length of undeserving days,  
Would you usurp the lover's dear-bought praise?  
To just contempt, ye vain pretenders, fall,  
The people's fable, and the scorn of all."  
Straight the black clarion sends a horrid sound,  
Loud laughs burst out, and bitter scoffs fly round,  
Whispers are heard, with taunts reviling loud,  
And scornful hisses run through all the crowd.

Last, those who boast of mighty mischiefs done,  
Enslave their country, or usurp a throne;  
Or who their glory's dire foundation laid  
On sovereigns ruin'd or on friends betray'd;  
Calm, thinking villains, whom no faith could fix,  
Of crooked counsels and dark politics;  
Of these a gloomy tribe surround the throne,  
And beg to make the immortal treasons known.  
The trumpet roars, long flaky flames expire,  
With sparks that seem'd to set the world on fire.  
At the dread sound, pale mortals stood aghast,  
And startled nature trembled with the blast.

This having heard and seen, some power unknown  
Straight changed the scene, and snatch'd me from the throne.



Before my view appear'd a structure fair,  
Its site uncertain, if in earth or air;  
With rapid motion turn'd the mansion round;  
With ceaseless noise the ringing walls resound;  
Not less in number were the spacious doors,  
Than leaves on trees, or sands upon the shores;  
Which still unfolded stand, by night, by day,  
Pervious to winds, and open every way.  
As flames by nature to the skies ascend,  
As weighty bodies to the centre tend,  
As to the sea returning rivers roll,  
And the touch'd needle trembles to the pole;  
Hither, as to their proper place, arise  
All various sounds from earth, and seas, and skies,  
Or spoke aloud, or whisper'd in the ear;  
Nor ever silence, rest, or peace, is here.  
As on the smooth expanse of crystal lakes  
The sinking stone at first a circle makes;  
The trembling surface, by the motion stirr'd,  
Spreads in a second circle, then a third;  
Wide, and more wide, the floating rings advance,  
Fill all the watery plain, and to the margin dance:  
Thus every voice and sound, when first they break,  
On neighbouring air a soft impression make;  
Another ambient circle then they move;  
That, in its turn, impels the next above;  
Through undulating air the sounds are sent,  
And spread o'er all the fluid element.

There various news I heard of love and strife,  
Of peace and war, health, sickness, death, and life,  
Of loss and gain, of famine and of store,  
Of storms at sea, and travels on the shore,  
Of prodigies, and portents seen in air,  
Of fires and plagues, and stars with blazing hair,  
Of turns of fortune, changes in the state,  
The falls of favourites, projects of the great,



Of old mismanagements, taxations new:  
All neither wholly false, nor wholly true.

Above, below, without, within, around,  
Confused, unnumber'd multitudes are found,  
Who pass, repass, advance, and glide away;  
Hosts raised by fear, and phantoms of a day:  
Astrologers, that future fates foreshew,  
Projectors, quacks, and lawyers not a few;  
And priests, and party zealots, numerous bands,  
With home-born lies, or tales from foreign lands;  
Each talk'd aloud, or in some secret place,  
And wild impatience stared in every face.  
The flying rumours gather'd as they roll'd,  
Scarce any tale was sooner heard than told;  
And all who told it added something new,  
And all who heard it made enlargements too,  
In every ear it spread, on every tongue it grew.  
Thus flying east and west, and north and south,  
News travell'd with increase from mouth to mouth.  
So from a spark, that kindled first by chance,  
With gathering force the quickening flames advance;  
Till to the clouds their curling heads aspire,  
And towers and temples sink in floods of fire.

When thus ripe lies are to perfection sprung,  
Full grown, and fit to grace a mortal tongue,  
Through thousand vents, impatient, forth they flow,  
And rush in millions on the world below,  
Fame sits aloft, and points them out their course,  
Their date determines, and prescribes their force:  
Some to remain, and some to perish soon;  
Or wane and wax alternate like the moon.  
Around, a thousand winged wonders fly,  
Borne by the trumpet's blast, and scatter'd through the sky.

There, at one passage, oft you might survey  
A lie and truth contending for the way;  
And long 't was doubtful, though so closely pent,  
Which first should issue through the narrow vent.



At last agreed, together out they fly,  
Inseparable now the truth and lie;  
The strict companions are for ever join'd,  
And this or that unmix'd, no mortal e'er shall find.

While thus I stood, intent to see and hear,  
One came, methought, and whisper'd in my ear:  
"What could thus high thy rash ambition raise?  
Art thou, fond youth, a candidate for praise?"

"'T is true," said I, "not void of hopes I came,  
For who so fond as youthful bards of Fame?  
But few, alas! the casual blessing boast,  
So hard to gain, so easy to be lost.  
How vain that second life in others' breath,  
The estate which wits inherit after death!  
Ease, health, and life, for this they must resign,  
(Unsure the tenure, but how vast the fine!)  
The great man's curse, without the gains, endure,  
Be envied, wretched, and be flatter'd, poor;  
All luckless wits their enemies profess'd,  
And all successful, jealous friends at cest.  
Nor Fame I slight, nor for her favours call;  
She comes unlook'd-for, if she comes at all.  
But if the purchase costs so dear a price  
As soothing folly, or exalting vice:  
Oh! if the muse must flatter lawless sway,  
And follow still where fortune leads the way;  
Or if no basis bear my rising name,  
But the fallen ruins of another's fame;  
Then, teach me, Heaven! to scorn the guilty bays,  
Drive from my breast that wretched lust of praise;  
Unblemish'd let me live, or die unknown;  
Oh, grant an honest fame, or grant me none!"

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# JANUARY AND MAY;

OR,

## THE MERCHANT'S TALE.

*From Chaucer.*

THERE lived in Lombardy, as authors write,  
In days of old, a wise and worthy knight;  
Of gentle manners, as of generous race,  
Bless'd with much sense, more riches, and some grace;  
Yet, led astray by Venus' soft delights,  
He scarce could rule some idle appetites:  
For long ago, let priests say what they could,  
Weak sinful laymen were but flesh and blood.

But in due time, when sixty years were o'er,  
He vow'd to lead this vicious life no more:  
Whether pure holiness inspired his mind,  
Or dotage turn'd his brain, is hard to find;  
But his high courage prick'd him forth to wed,  
And try the pleasures of a lawful bed.  
This was his nightly dream, his daily care,  
And to the heavenly powers his constant prayer,  
Once ere he died, to taste the blissful life  
Of a kind husband and a loving wife.

These thoughts he fortified with reasons still  
(For none want reasons to confirm their will).  
Grave authors say, and witty poets sing,  
That honest wedlock is a glorious thing:  
But depth of judgment most in him appears,  
Who wisely weds in his maturer years.  
Then let him choose a damsel young and fair,  
To bless his age, and bring a worthy heir;  
To soothe his cares, and, free from noise and strife,  
Conduct him gently to the verge of life.



Let sinful bachelors their woes deplore,  
 Full well they merit all they feel, and more:  
 Unawed by precepts human or divine,  
 Like birds and beasts promiscuously they join:  
 Nor know to make the present blessing last,  
 To hope the future, or esteem the past:  
 But vainly boast the joys they never tried,  
 And find divulged the secrets they would hide.  
 The married man may bear his yoke with ease,  
 Secure at once himself and Heaven to please;  
 And pass his inoffensive hours away,  
 In bliss all night, and innocence all day:  
 Though fortune change, his constant spouse remains,  
 Augments his joys, or mitigates his pains.

But what so pure, which envious tongues will spare?  
 Some wicked wits have libell'd all the fair.  
 With matchless impudence they style a wife  
 The dear-bought curse, and lawful plague of life;  
 A bosom-serpent, a domestic evil,  
 A night-invasion, and a mid-day devil.  
 Let not the wise these slanderous words regard,  
 But curse the bones of every lying bard.  
 All other goods by fortune's hand are given,  
 A wife is the peculiar gift of Heaven.  
 Vain fortune's favours, never at a stay,  
 Like empty shadows, pass, and glide away;  
 One solid comfort, our eternal wife,  
 Abundantly supplies us all our life:  
 This blessing lasts (if those who try say true)  
 As long as heart can wish — and longer too.

Our grandsire Adam, ere of Eve possess'd,  
 Alone, and e'en in Paradise unblest'd,  
 With mournful looks the blissful scenes survey'd,  
 And wander'd in the solitary shade:  
 The Maker saw, took pity, and bestow'd  
 Woman, the last, the best reserved of God.

A wife! ah gentle deities, can he



That has a wife, e'er feel adversity?  
Would men but follow what the sex advise,  
All things would prosper, all the world grow wise.  
'T was by Rebecca's aid that Jacob won  
His father's blessing from an elder son:  
Abusive Nabal owed his forfeit life  
To the wise conduct of a prudent wife:  
Heroic Judith, as old Hebrews show,  
Preserved the Jews, and slew the Assyrian foe:  
At Esther's suit, the persecuting sword  
Was sheathed, and Israel lived to bless the Lord

These weighty motives, January the sage  
Maturely ponder'd in his riper age;  
And, charm'd with virtuous joys and sober life,  
Would try that Christian comfort, call'd a wife.  
His friends were summon'd on a point so nice,  
To pass their judgment, and to give advice;  
But fix'd before, and well resolved was he;  
(As men that ask advice are wont to be).

"My friends," he cried (and cast a mournful look  
Around the room, and sigh'd before he spoke):  
"Beneath the weight of threescore years I bend,  
And worn with cares, and hastening to my end;  
How I have lived, alas! you know too well,  
In worldly follies, which I blush to tell;  
But gracious Heaven has oped my eyes at last,  
With due regret I view my vices past,  
And, as the precept of the Church decrees,  
Will take a wife, and live in holy ease.  
But, since by counsel all things should be done,  
And many heads are wiser still than one;  
Choose you for me, who best shall be content  
When my desire's approved by your consent.

"One caution yet is needful to be told,  
To guide your choice; this wife must not be old:  
There goes a saying, and 't was shrewdly said,  
Old fish at table, but young flesh in bed.



My soul abhors the tasteless, dry embrace  
Of a stale virgin with a winter face:  
In that cold season Love but treats his guest  
With bean-straw, and tough forage at the best.  
No crafty widows shall approach my bed;  
Those are too wise for bachelors to wed;  
As subtle clerks by many schools are made,  
Twice married dames are mistresses of the trade:  
But young and tender virgins, ruled with ease,  
We form like wax, and mould them as we please.

“Conceive me, sirs, nor take my sense amiss;  
'T is what concerns my soul's eternal bliss:  
Since if I found no pleasure in my spouse,  
As flesh is frail, and who (God help me) knows?  
Then should I live in lewd adultery,  
And sink downright to Satan when I die.  
Or were I cursed with an unfruitful bed,  
The righteous end were lost for which I wed;  
To raise up seed to bless the powers above,  
And not for pleasure only, or for love.  
Think not I dote; 't is time to take a wife,  
When vigorous blood forbids a chaster life:  
Those that are bless'd with store of grace divine,  
May live like saints, by Heaven's consent and mine.

“And since I speak of wedlock, let me say  
(As thank my stars, in modest truth I may),  
My limbs are active, still I 'm sound at heart,  
And a new vigour springs in every part.  
Think not my virtue lost, though time has shed  
These reverend honours on my hoary head;  
Thus trees are crown'd with blossoms white as snow,  
The vital sap then rising from below:  
Old as I am, my lusty limbs appear  
Like winter greens, that flourish all the year.  
Now, sirs, you know to what I stand inclined,  
Let every friend with freedom speak his mind.”

He said; the rest in different parts divide;



The knotty point was urged on either side:  
Marriage, the theme on which they all declaim'd,  
Some praised with wit, and some with reason blamed:  
Till what with proofs, objections, and replies,  
Each wondrous positive, and wondrous wise,  
There fell between his brothers a debate,  
Placebo this was call'd, and Justin that.

First to the knight Placebo thus begun  
(Mild were his looks, and pleasing was his tone):  
"Such prudence, Sir, in all your words appears,  
As plainly proves, experience dwells with years!  
Yet you pursue sage Solomon's advice,  
To work by counsel when affairs are nice:  
But, with the wise man's leave, I must protest,  
So may my soul arrive at ease and rest,  
As still I hold your own advice the best.

"Sir, I have lived a courtier all my days,  
And studied men, their manners, and their ways;  
And have observed this useful maxim still,  
To let my betters always have their will.  
Nay, if my lord affirm that black was white,  
My word was this: 'Your honour's in the right.'  
The assuming wit, who deems himself so wise,  
As his mistaken patron to advise,  
Let him not dare to vent his dangerous thought,  
A noble fool was never in a fault.

This, Sir, affects not you, whose every word  
Is weigh'd with judgment, and befits a lord:  
Your will is mine; and is (I will maintain)  
Pleasing to God, and should be so to man!  
At least, your courage all the world must praise,  
Who dare to wed in your declining days.  
Indulge the vigour of your mounting blood,  
And let gray fools be indolently good,  
Who, past all pleasure, damn the joys of sense,  
With reverend dulness, and grave impotence."



Justin, who silent sat, and heard the man,  
Thus, with a philosophic frown, began:

“A heathen author of the first degree  
(Who, though not faith, had sense as well as we).  
Bids us be certain our concerns to trust  
To those of generous principles, and just.  
The venture's greater, I'll presume to say,  
To give your person, than your goods away:  
And therefore, Sir, as you regard your rest,  
First learn your lady's qualities at least:  
Whether she's chaste or rampant, proud or civil,  
Meek as a saint, or haughty as the devil;  
Whether an easy, fond, familiar fool,  
Or such a wit as no man e'er can rule.  
'T is true, perfection none must hope to find  
In all this world, much less in womankind;  
But, if her virtues prove the larger share,  
Bless the kind Fates, and think your fortune rare.  
Ah, gentle Sir, take warning of a friend,  
Who knows too well the state you thus commend;  
And, spite of all his praises, must declare,  
All he can find is bondage, cost, and care.  
Heaven knows, I shed full many a private tear,  
And sigh in silence, lest the world should hear!  
While all my friends applaud my blissful life,  
And swear no mortal's happier in a wife;  
Demure and chaste as any vestal nun,  
The meekest creature that beholds the sun!  
But, by the immortal powers, I feel the pain,  
And he that smarts has reason to complain.  
Do what you list, for me; you must be sage,  
And cautious sure; for wisdom is in age:  
But at these years, to venture on the fair;  
By him who made the ocean, earth, and air,  
To please a wife, when her occasions call,  
Would busy the most vigorous of us all.  
And trust me, Sir, the chastest you can choose



Will ask observance, and exact her dues.  
If what I speak my noble lord offend,  
My tedious sermon here is at an end."

"'T is well, 't is wondrous well," the knight replies,  
"Most worthy kinsman; 'faith you 're mighty wise!  
We, sirs, are fools; and must resign the cause  
To heathenish authors, proverbs, and old saws."  
He spoke with scorn, and turn'd another way: —  
"What does my friend: my dear Placebo, say?"

"I say," quoth he, "by Heaven the man's to blame,  
To slander wives, and wedlock's holy name."

At this the council rose, without delay;  
Each, in his own opinion, went his way;  
With full consent, that, all disputes appeased,  
The knight should marry, when and where he pleased.

Who now but January exults with joy:  
The charms of wedlock all his soul employ;  
Each nymph by turns his wavering mind possess'd,  
And reign'd the short-lived tyrant of his breast;  
While fancy pictured every lively part,  
And each bright image wander'd o'er his heart.  
Thus, in some public forum fix'd on high,  
A mirror shows the figures moving by;  
Still one by one, in swift succession, pass  
The gliding shadows o'er the polish'd glass.  
This lady's charms the nicest could not blame,  
But vile suspicions had aspersed her fame;  
That was with sense, but not with virtue, bless'd;  
And one had grace, that wanted all the rest.  
Thus doubting long what nymph he should obey,  
He fix'd at last upon the youthful May.  
Her faults he knew not, Love is always blind,  
But every charm revolved within his mind:  
Her tender age, her form divinely fair,  
Her easy motion, her attractive air,  
Her sweet behaviour, her enchanting face,  
Her moving softness, and majestic grace.



Much in his prudence did our knight rejoice,  
And thought no mortal could dispute his choice;  
Once more in haste he summon'd every friend,  
And told them all, their pains were at an end.  
"Heaven, that (said he) inspired me first to wed,  
Provides a consort worthy of my bed:  
Let none oppose the election, since on this  
Depends my quiet, and my future bliss.

"A dame there is, the darling of my eyes,  
Young, beauteous, artless, innocent, and wise;  
Chaste, though not rich; and, though not nobly born,  
Of honest parents, and may serve my turn.  
Her will I wed, if gracious Heaven so please,  
To pass my age in sanctity and ease:  
And thank the powers, I may possess alone  
The lovely prize, and share my bliss with none!  
If you, my friends, this virgin can procure,  
My joys are full, my happiness is sure.

"One only doubt remains: full oft I've heard,  
By casuists grave, and deep divines averr'd,  
That 't is too much for human race to know  
The bliss of heaven above, and earth below.  
Now should the nuptial pleasures prove so great,  
To match the blessings of the future state,  
Those endless joys were ill-exchanged for these;  
Then clear this doubt, and set my mind at ease."

This Justin heard, nor could his spleen control,  
Touch'd to the quick, and tickled at the soul.  
"Sir knight," he cried, "if this be all you dread,  
Heaven put it past your doubt, whene'er you wed;  
And to my fervent prayers so far consent,  
That, ere the rites are o'er, you may repent!  
Good Heaven, no doubt, the nuptial state approves,  
Since it chastises still what best it loves.  
Then be not, Sir, abandon'd to despair;  
Seek, and perhaps you'll find among the fair,  
One that may do your business to a hair;



Not e'en in wish, your happiness delay,  
But prove the scourge to lash you on your way:  
Then to the skies your mounting soul shall go,  
Swift as an arrow soaring from the bow!  
Provided still, you moderate your joy,  
Nor in your pleasures all your might employ,  
Let reason's rule your strong desires abate,  
Nor please too lavishly your gentle mate.  
Old wives there are, of judgment most acute,  
Who solve these questions beyond all dispute;  
Consult with those, and be of better cheer;  
Marry, do penance, and dismiss your fear."

So said, they rose, nor more the work delay'd;  
The match was offer'd, the proposals made.  
The parents, you may think, would soon comply;  
The old have interest ever in their eye.  
Nor was it hard to move the lady's mind;  
When fortune favours, still the fair are kind.

I pass each previous settlement and deed,  
Too long for me to write, or you to read;  
Nor will with quaint impertinence display  
The pomp, the pageantry, the proud array.  
The time approach'd, to church the parties went,  
At once with carnal and devout intent:  
Forth came the priest, and bade the obedient wife,  
Like Sarah or Rebecca lead her life;  
Then pray'd the powers the fruitful bed to bless,  
And made all sure enough with holiness.

And now the palace gates are open'd wide,  
The guests appear in order, side by side,  
And placed in state the bridegroom and the bride.  
The breathing flute's soft notes are heard around,  
And the shrill trumpets mix their silver sound;  
The vaulted roofs with echoing music ring,  
These touch the vocal stops and those the trembling string.  
Not thus Amphion tuned the warbling lyre,  
Nor Joab the sounding clarion could inspire,



Nor fierce Theodamas, whose sprightly strain  
Could swell the soul to rage, and fire the martial train.

Bacchus himself, the nuptial feast to grace,  
(So poets sing) was present on the place:  
And lovely Venus, goddess of delight,  
Shook high her flaming torch in open sight,  
And danced around, and smiled on every knight:  
Pleased her best servant would his courage try,  
No less in wedlock, than in liberty.  
Full many an age old Hymen had not spied  
So kind a bridegroom, or so bright a bride.  
Ye bards! renown'd among the tuneful throng  
For gentle lays, and joyous nuptial song,  
Think not your softest numbers can display  
The matchless glories of the blissful day:  
The joys are such as far transcend your rage,  
When tender youth has wedded stooping age.

The beauteous dame sat smiling at the board,  
And darted amorous glances at her lord.  
Not Esther's self, whose charms the Hebrews sing,  
E'er look'd so lovely on her Persian king.  
Bright as the rising sun in summer's day,  
And fresh and blooming as the month of May!  
The joyful knight survey'd her by his side,  
Nor envied Paris with the Spartan bride:  
Still as his mind revolved with vast delight  
The entrancing raptures of the approaching night,  
Restless he sate, invoking every power  
To speed his bliss, and haste the happy hour.  
Meantime the vigorous dancers beat the ground,  
And songs were sung, and flowing bowls went round.  
With odorous spices they perfumed the place,  
And mirth and pleasure shone in every face.

Damian alone of all the menial train,  
Sad in the midst of triumphs, sigh'd for pain;  
Damian alone, the knight's obsequious 'squire,  
Consumed at heart, and fed a secret fire.



His lovely mistress all his soul possess'd;  
He look'd, he languish'd, and could take no rest;  
His task perform'd, he sadly went his way,  
Fell on his bed, and loathed the light of day.  
There let him lie, till his relenting dame  
Weep in her turn, and waste in equal flame.

The wearied sun, as learned poets write,  
Forsook the horizon, and roll'd down the light;  
While glittering stars his absent beams supply,  
And night's dark mantle overspread the sky.  
Then rose the guests; and, as the time required,  
Each paid his thanks, and decently retired.

The foe once gone, our knight prepared to undress,  
So keen he was, and eager to possess:  
But first thought fit the assistance to receive,  
Which grave physicians scruple not to give;  
Satyrion near, with hot eringos stood,  
Cantharides, to fire the lazy blood,  
Whose use old bards describe in luscious rhymes,  
And critics learn'd explain to modern times.

By this the sheets were spread, the bride undress'd,  
The room was sprinkled, and the bed was bless'd.  
What next ensued beseems not me to say;  
'T is sung, he labour'd till the dawning day,  
Then briskly sprung from bed, with heart so light,  
As all were nothing he had done by night;  
And sipp'd his cordial as he sat upright.  
He kiss'd his balmy spouse with wanton play,  
And feebly sung a lusty roundelay:  
Then on the couch his weary limbs he cast;  
For every labour must have rest at last.

But anxious cares the pensive 'squire oppress'd,  
Sleep fled his eyes, and peace forsook his breast:  
The raging flames that in his bosom dwell,  
He wanted art to hide, and means to tell;  
Yet hoping time the occasion might betray,  
Composed a sonnet to the lovely May;



Which, writ and folded with the nicest art,  
He wrapp'd in silk, and laid upon his heart.

When now the fourth revolving day was run  
( 'T was June, and Cancer had received the sun ),  
Forth from her chamber came the beauteous bride;  
The good old knight moved slowly by her side.  
High mass was sung; they feasted in the hall;  
The servants round stood ready at their call.  
The 'squire alone was absent from the board,  
And much his sickness grieved his worthy lord,  
Who pray'd his spouse, attended with her train,  
To visit Damian, and divert his pain.  
The obliging dames obey'd with one consent;  
They left the hall, and to his lodging went.  
The female tribe surround him as he lay,  
And close beside him sate the gentle May:  
Where, as she tried his pulse, he softly drew  
A heaving sigh, and cast a mournful view!  
Then gave his bill, and bribed the powers divine,  
With secret vows, to favour his design.

Who studies now but discontented May?  
On her soft couch uneasily she lay;  
The lumpish husband snored away the night,  
Till coughs awaked him near the morning light.  
What then he did, I 'll not presume to tell,  
Nor if she thought herself in heaven or hell;  
Honest and dull in nuptial bed they lay,  
Till the bell toll'd, and all arose to pray.

Were it by forceful destiny decreed,  
Or did from chance, or nature's power proceed;  
Or that some star, with aspect kind to love,  
Shed its selectest influence from above;  
Whatever was the cause, the tender dame  
Felt the first motions of an infant flame;  
Received the impressions of the love-sick 'squire,  
And wasted in the soft infectious fire.

Ye fair, draw near, let May's example move



Your gentle minds to pity those who love!  
Had some fierce tyrant in her stead been found,  
The poor adorer sure had hang'd, or drown'd:  
But she, your sex's mirror, free from pride,  
Was much too meek to prove a homicide.

But to my tale: Some ages have defined  
Pleasure the sovereign bliss of human-kind:  
Our knight (who studied much, we may suppose)  
Derived his high philosophy from those;  
For, like a prince, he bore the vast expense  
Of lavish pomp, and proud magnificence:  
His house was stately, his retinue gay;  
Large was his train, and gorgeous his array.  
His spacious garden, made to yield to none,  
Was compass'd round with walls of solid stone;  
Priapus could not half describe the grace  
(Though god of gardens) of this charming place:  
A place to tire the rambling wits of France  
In long descriptions, and exceed romance;  
Enough to shame the gentlest bard that sings  
Of painted meadows, and of purling springs.

Full in the centre of the flowery ground,  
A crystal fountain spread its streams around  
The fruitful banks with verdant laurels crown'd;  
About this spring (if ancient fame say true)  
The dapper elves their moon-light sports pursue;  
Their pigmy king, and little fairy queen,  
In circling dances gambol'd on the green,  
While tuneful sprites a merry concert made,  
And airy music warbled through the shade

Hither the noble knight would oft repair  
(His scene of pleasure, and peculiar care),  
For this he held it dear, and always bore  
The silver key that lock'd the garden-door,  
To this sweet place, in summer's sultry heat,  
He used from noise and business to retreat;  
And here in dalliance spend the live-long day,



*Solus cum sola*, with his sprightly May;  
For whate'er work was undischarged a-bed,  
The duteous knight in this fair garden sped.

But ah! what mortal lives of bliss secure?  
How short a space our worldly joys endure!  
O Fortune, fair, like all thy treacherous kind,  
But faithless still, and wavering as the wind!  
O painted monster, form'd mankind to cheat  
With pleasing poison, and with soft deceit!  
This rich, this amorous, venerable knight,  
Amidst his ease, his solace, and delight,  
Struck blind by thee, resigns his days to grief,  
And calls on death, the wretch's last relief.

The rage of jealousy then seized his mind,  
For much he fear'd the faith of womankind.  
His wife, not suffer'd from his side to stray,  
Was captive kept; he watch'd her night and day,  
Abridged her pleasures, and confined her sway.  
Full oft in tears did hapless May complain,  
And sigh'd full oft; but sigh'd and wept in vain:  
She look'd on Damian with a lover's eye;  
For, oh, 't was fix'd, she must possess or die!  
Nor less impatience vex'd her amorous 'squire,  
Wild with delay, and burning with desire.  
Watch'd as she was, yet could he not refrain  
By secret writing to disclose his pain:  
The dame by signs reveal'd her kind intent,  
Till both were conscious what each other meant.

Ah! gentle knight, what could thy eyes avail,  
Though they could see as far as ships can sail?  
'T is better, sure, when blind, deceived to be,  
Than be deluded when a man can see!

Argus himself, so cautious and so wise,  
Was over-watch'd, for all his hundred eyes:  
So many an honest husband may, 't is known,  
Who, wisely, never thinks the case his own.

The dame at last, by diligence and care,



Procured the key her knight was wont to bear;  
She took the wards in wax before the fire,  
And gave the impression to the trusty 'squire.  
By means of this, some wonder shall appear,  
Which, in due place and season, you may hear.

Well sung sweet Ovid, in the days of yore,  
What slight is that, which love will not explore?  
And Pyramus and Thisbe plainly show  
The feats true lovers, when they list, can do:  
Though watch'd and captive, yet in spite of all,  
They found the art of kissing through a wall.

But now no longer from our tale to stray;  
It happ'd, that once upon a summer's day,  
Our reverend knight was urged to amorous play:  
He raised his spouse ere matin-bell was rung,  
And thus his morning canticle he sung:  
"Awake, my love, disclose thy radiant eyes;  
Arise, my wife, my beauteous lady, rise!  
Hear how the doves with pensive notes complain,  
And in soft murmurs tell the trees their pain:  
The winter's past; the clouds and tempests fly;  
The sun adorns the fields, and brightens all the sky  
Fair without spot, whose every charming part  
My bosom wounds, and captivates my heart;  
Come, and in mutual pleasures let's engage,  
Joy of my life, and comfort of my age."

This heard, to Damian straight a sign she made,  
To haste before; the gentle 'squire obey'd:  
Secret and undescried, he took his way,  
And ambush'd close behind an arbour lay.

It was not long ere January came,  
And hand in hand with him his lovely dame;  
Blind as he was, not doubting all was sure,  
He turn'd the key, and made the gate secure.

"Here let us walk," he said, "observed by none  
Conscious of pleasures to the world unknown:  
So may my soul have joy, as thou, my wife,



Art far the dearest solace of my life;  
And rather would I choose, by Heaven above,  
To die this instant, than to lose thy love.  
Reflect what truth was in my passion shown,  
When unendow'd I took thee for my own,  
And sought no treasure but thy heart alone.  
Old as I am, and now deprived of sight,  
Whilst thou art faithful to thy own true knight,  
Nor age nor blindness rob me of delight.  
Each other loss with patience I can bear:  
The loss of thee is what I only fear.

“Consider then, my lady, and my wife,  
The solid comforts of a virtuous life.  
As, first, the love of Christ himself you gain;  
Next, your own honour undefiled maintain;  
And lastly, that which sure your mind must move,  
My whole estate shall gratify your love:  
Make your own terms, and ere to-morrow's sun  
Displays his light, by Heaven, it shall be done.  
I seal the contract with a holy kiss,  
And will perform, by this — my dear, and this —  
Have comfort, spouse, nor think thy lord unkind;  
'T is love, not jealousy, that fires my mind.  
For when thy charms my sober thoughts engage,  
And join'd to them my own unequal age,  
From thy dear side I have no power to part,  
Such secret transports warm my melting heart.  
For who, that once possess'd those heavenly charms,  
Could live one moment absent from thy arms?”

He ceased, and May with modest grace replied  
(Weak was her voice, as while she spoke she cried).  
“Heaven knows,” with that a tender sigh she drew,  
“I have a soul to save as well as you;  
And, what no less you to my charge commend,  
My dearest honour, will to death defend.  
To you in holy church I gave my hand,  
And join'd my heart in wedlock's sacred band:



Yet, after this, if you distrust my care,  
Then hear, my lord, and witness what I swear:

“First may the yawning earth her bosom rend,  
And let me hence to hell alive descend;  
Or die the death I dread no less than hell,  
Sew’d in a sack, and plunged into a well;  
Ere I my fame by one lewd act disgrace,  
Or once renounce the honour of my race:  
For know, Sir knight, of gentle blood I came;  
I loathe a whore, and startle at the name.  
But jealous men on their own crimes reflect,  
And learn from hence their ladies to suspect:  
Else why these needless cautions, Sir, to me?  
These doubts and fears of female constancy?  
This chime still rings in every lady’s ear,  
The only strain a wife must hope to hear.”

Thus while she spoke, a sidelong glance she cast,  
Where Damian, kneeling, worshipp’d as she pass’d.  
She saw him watch the motions of her eye,  
And singled out a pear-tree planted nigh:  
’T was charged with fruit that made a goodly show,  
And hung with dangling pears was every bough.  
Thither the obsequious ’squire address’d his pace,  
And, climbing, in the summit took his place;  
The knight and lady walk’d beneath in view,  
Where let us leave them, and our tale pursue.

’T was now the season when the glorious sun  
His heavenly progress through the Twins had run;  
And Jove, exalted, his mild influence yields,  
To glad the glebe, and paint the flowery fields.  
Clear was the day, and Phœbus, rising bright,  
Had streak’d the azure firmament with light;  
He pierced the glittering clouds with golden streams,  
And warm’d the womb of earth with genial beams.

It so befell, in that fair morning-tide,  
The fairies sported on the garden-side,  
And in the midst their monarch and his bride.



So featly tripp'd the light-foot ladies round,  
The knights so nimbly o'er the greensward bound,  
That scarce they bent the flowers, or touch'd the ground.  
The dances ended, all the fairy train  
For pinks and daisies search'd the flowery plain;  
While, on a bank reclined of rising green,  
Thus, with a frown, the king bespoke his queen:

“'Tis too apparent, argue what you can,  
The treachery you women use to man:  
A thousand authors have this truth made out,  
And sad experience leaves no room for doubt.

“Heaven rest thy spirit, noble Solomon,  
A wiser monarch never saw the sun;  
All wealth, all honours, the supreme degree  
Of earthly bliss, was well bestow'd on thee!  
For sagely hast thou said: ‘Of all mankind,  
One only just and righteous hope to find:  
But shouldst thou search the spacious world around,  
Yet one good woman is not to be found.’

“Thus says the king, who knew your wickedness:  
The son of Sirach testifies no less.  
So may some wildfire on your bodies fall,  
Or some devouring plague consume you all;  
As well you view the lecher in the tree,  
And well this honourable knight you see:  
But since he's blind and old (a helpless case),  
His 'squire shall cuckold him before your face.

“Now, by my own dread majesty I swear,  
And by this awful sceptre which I bear,  
No impious wretch shall 'scape unpunish'd long,  
That in my presence offers such a wrong.  
I will this instant undeceive the knight,  
And in the very act restore his sight;  
And set the strumpet here in open view,  
A warning to these ladies, and to you,  
And all the faithless sex, for ever to be true.”

“And will you so,” replied the queen, “indeed?



Now, by my mother's soul, it is decreed,  
She shall not want an answer at her need.  
For her, and for her daughters, I'll engage,  
And all the sex in each succeeding age!  
Art shall be theirs, to varnish an offence,  
And fortify their crime with confidence.  
Nay, were they taken in a strict embrace,  
Seen with both eyes, and pinion'd on the place;  
All they shall need is to protest and swear,  
Breathe a soft sigh, and drop a tender tear;  
Till their wise husbands, gull'd by arts like these,  
Grow gentle, tractable, and tame as geese.

“What though this slanderous Jew, this Solomon,  
Call'd women fools, and knew full many a one:  
The wiser wits of later times declare,  
How constant, chaste, and virtuous, women are:  
Witness the martyrs, who resign'd their breath,  
Serene in torments, unconcern'd in death,  
And witness next what Roman authors tell,  
How Arria, Portia, and Lucretia fell.

“But, since the sacred leaves to all are free,  
And men interpret texts, why should not we?  
By this no more was meant, than to have shown,  
That sovereign goodness dwells in him alone  
Who only is, and is but only One.  
But grant the worst; shall women then be weigh'd  
By every word that Solomon has said?  
What though this king (as ancient story boasts)  
Built a fair temple to the Lord of Hosts;  
He ceased at last his Maker to adore,  
And did as much for idol-gods, or more.  
Beware what lavish praises you confer  
On a rank lecher and idolater:  
Whose reign, indulgent God, says holy writ,  
Did but for David's righteous sake permit;  
David, the monarch after Heaven's own mind,  
Who loved our sex, and honour'd all our kind.



“Well, I ’m a woman, and as such must speak;  
Silence would swell me, and my heart would break.  
Know then, I scorn your dull authorities,  
Your idle wits, and all their learned lies.  
By Heaven, those authors are our sex’s foes,  
Whom, in our right, I must and will oppose.”

“Nay,” quoth the king, “dear Madam, be not wroth:  
I yield it up; but since I gave my oath,  
That this much-injured knight again should see,  
It must be done — I am a king,” said he,  
“And one, whose faith has ever sacred been.”  
“And so has mine,” she said, — “I am a queen;  
Her answer she shall have, I undertake;  
And thus an end of all dispute I make.  
Try when you list; and you shall find, my lord,  
It is not in our sex to break our word.”

We leave them here in this heroic strain,  
And to the knight our story turns again;  
Who in the garden, with his lovely May,  
Sung merrier than the cuckow or the jay:  
This was his song; “Oh, kind and constant be,  
Constant and kind I ’ll ever prove to thee.”

Thus singing as he went, at last he drew  
By easy steps, to where the pear-tree grew:  
The longing dame look’d up, and spied her love  
Full fairly perch’d among the boughs above.  
She stopp’d and sighing: “Oh, good gods!” she cried,  
“What pangs, what sudden shoots, distend my side!  
O for that tempting fruit, so fresh, so green:  
Help, for the love of heaven’s immortal queen!  
Help, dearest lord, and save at once the life  
Of thy poor infant, and thy longing wife!”

Sore sigh’d the knight to hear his lady’s cry,  
But could not climb, and had no servant nigh:  
Old as he was, and void of eye-sight too,  
What could, alas! a helpless husband do?  
“And must I languish then,” she said, “and die,



Yet view the lovely fruit before my eye?  
At least, kind Sir, for charity's sweet sake,  
Vouchsafe the trunk between your arms to take,  
Then from your back I might ascend the tree;  
Do you but stoop, and leave the rest to me."

"With all my soul," he thus replied again;  
"I'd spend my dearest blood to ease thy pain."  
With that, his back against the trunk he bent,  
She seized a twig, and up the tree she went.

Now prove your patience, gentle ladies all!  
Nor let on me your heavy anger fall:  
'T is truth I tell, though not in phrase refined;  
Though blunt my tale, yet honest is my mind.  
What feats the lady in the tree might do,  
I pass, as gambols never known to you;  
But sure it was a merrier fit, she swore,  
Than in her life she ever felt before.

In that nice moment, lo! the wondering knight  
Look'd out, and stood restored to sudden sight.  
Straight on the tree his eager eyes he bent,  
As one whose thoughts were on his spouse intent;  
But when he saw his bosom-wife so dress'd,  
His rage was such as cannot be express'd:  
Not frantic mothers when their infants die,  
With louder clamours rend the vaulted sky:  
He cried, he roar'd, he storm'd, he tore his hair:  
"Death! hell! and furies! what dost thou do there?"

"What ails my lord?" the trembling dame replied;  
"I thought your patience had been better tried:  
Is this your love, ungrateful and unkind,  
This my reward for having cured the blind?  
Why was I taught to make my husband see,  
By struggling with a man upon a tree?  
Did I for this the power of magic prove?  
Unhappy wife, whose crime was too much love!"

"If this be struggling, by this holy light,  
'T is struggling with a vengeance," quoth the knight:



“So Heaven preserve the sight it has restored,  
As with these eyes I plainly saw thee whored;  
Whored by my slave — perfidious wretch! may hell  
As surely seize thee, as I saw too well!”

“Guard me, good angels!” cried the gentle May,  
“Pray Heaven, this magic work the proper way!  
Alas, my love! ’t is certain, could you see,  
You ne’er had used these killing words to me:  
So help me, Fates, as ’t is no perfect sight,  
But some faint glimmering of a doubtful light.”

“What I have said,” quoth he, “I must maintain,  
For by the immortal powers it seem’d too plain.” —

“By all those powers, some frenzy seized your mind,”  
Replied the dame: “are these the thanks I find?  
Wretch that I am, that e’er I was so kind!”  
She said; a rising sigh express’d her woe,  
The ready tears apace began to flow,  
And, as they fell, she wiped from either eye  
The drops (for women, when they list, can cry).

The knight was touch’d, and in his looks appear’d  
Signs of remorse, while thus his spouse he cheer’d:  
“Madam, ’t is pass’d, and my short anger o’er;  
Come down, and vex your tender heart no more:  
Excuse me, dear, if aught amiss was said,  
For, on my soul, amends shall soon be made:  
Let my repentance your forgiveness draw.  
By Heaven, I swore but what I thought I saw.”

“Ah, my loved lord! ’t was much unkind,” she cried,  
“On bare suspicion thus to treat your bride.  
But, till your sight’s establish’d for a while,  
Imperfect objects may your sense beguile.  
Thus when from sleep we first our eyes display,  
The balls are wounded with the piercing ray,  
And dusky vapours rise, and intercept the day.  
So, just recovering from the shades of night,  
Your swimming eyes are drunk with sudden light,  
Strange phantoms dance around, and skim before your sight:



Then, Sir, be cautious, nor too rashly deem.  
Heaven knows how seldom things are what they seem!  
Consult your reason, and you soon shall find  
'T was you were jealous, not your wife unkind:  
Jove ne'er spoke oracle more true than this,  
None judge so wrong as those who think amiss."

With that she leap'd into her lord's embrace,  
With well-dissembled virtue in her face.  
He hugg'd her close, and kiss'd her o'er and o'er,  
Disturb'd with doubts and jealousies no more:  
Both, pleased and bless'd, renew'd their mutual vows,  
A fruitful wife, and a believing spouse.

Thus ends our tale; whose moral next to make,  
Let all wise husbands hence example take;  
And pray, to crown the pleasure of their lives,  
To be so well deluded by their wives.

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# THE WIFE OF BATH.

## HER PROLOGUE.

FROM CHAUCER.

BEHOLD the woes of matrimonial life,  
And hear with reverence an experienced wife!  
To dear-bought wisdom give the credit due,  
And think for once a woman tells you true.  
In all these trials I have borne a part,  
I was myself the scourge that caused the smart;  
For, since fifteen, in triumph have I led  
Five captive husbands from the church to bed.

Christ saw a wedding once, the Scripture says,  
And saw but one, 't is thought, in all his days;  
Whence some infer, whose conscience is too nice,  
No pious Christian ought to marry twice.

But let them read, and solve me, if they can,  
The words address'd to the Samaritan:  
Five times in lawful wedlock she was join'd;  
And sure the certain stint was ne'er defined.

"Increase and multiply," was Heaven's command  
And that 's a text I clearly understand.  
This too, "Let men their sires and mothers leave,  
And to their dearer wives for ever cleave."  
More wives than one by Solomon were tried,  
Or else the wisest of mankind's belied.  
I 've had myself full many a merry fit,  
And trust in heaven, I may have many yet;  
For when my transitory spouse, unkind,  
Shalldie, and leave his woful wife behind,  
I 'll take the next good Christian I can find.



Paul, knowing one could never serve our turn,  
Declared 't was better far to wed than burn.  
There 's danger in assembling fire and tow;  
I grant them that, and what it means you know,  
The same apostle too has elsewhere own'd,  
No precept for virginity he found:  
'T is but a counsel — and we women still  
Take which we like, the counsel, or our will.

I envy not their bliss, if he or she  
Think fit to live in perfect chastity.  
Pure let them be, and free from taint of vice;  
I, for a few slight spots, am not so nice.  
Heaven calls us different ways, on these bestows  
One proper gift, another grants to those:  
Not every man's obliged to sell his store,  
And give up all his substance to the poor;  
Such as are perfect may, I can't deny;  
But, by your leaves, divines, so am not I.

Full many a saint, since first the world began,  
Lived an unspotted maid, in spite of man:  
Let such (a-God's name) with fine wheat be fed,  
And let us honest wives eat barley bread.  
For me, I'll keep the post assign'd by Heaven,  
And use the copious talent it has given:  
Let my good spouse pay tribute, do me right,  
And keep an equal reckoning every night.  
His proper body is not his, but mine;  
For so said Paul, and Paul's a sound divine.

Know then, of those five husbands I have had,  
Three were just tolerable, two were bad,  
The three were old, but rich and fond beside,  
And toil'd most piteously to please their bride:  
But since their wealth (the best they had) was mine,  
The rest, without much loss, I could resign.  
Sure to be loved, I took no pains to please,  
Yet had more pleasure far than they had ease.

Presents flow'd in apace: with showers of gold,



They made their court, like Jupiter of old.  
If I but smiled, a sudden youth they found,  
And a new palsy seized them when I frown'd.

Ye sovereign wives! give ear and understand,  
Thus shall ye speak, and exercise command.  
For never was it given to mortal man,  
To lie so boldly as we women can:  
Forswear the fact, though seen with both his eyes,  
And call your maids to witness how he lies.

“Hark, old Sir Paul!” ’t was thus I used to say,  
“Whence is our neighbour’s wife so rich and gay?  
Treated, caress’d, where’er she ’s pleased to roam —  
I sit in tatters, and immured at home.  
Why to her house dost thou so oft repair?  
Art thou so amorous? and is she so fair?  
If I but see a cousin or a friend,  
Lord! how you swell, and rage like any fiend!  
But you reel home, a drunken beastly bear,  
Then preach till midnight in your easy chair;  
Cry, wives are false, and every woman evil,  
And give up all that ’s female to the devil.

“If poor (you say) she drains her husband’s purse;  
If rich, she keeps her priest, or something worse;  
If highly born, intolerably vain,  
Vapours and pride by turns possess her brain,  
Now gaily mad, now sourly splenetic;  
Freakish when well, and fretful when she ’s sick.  
If fair, then chaste she cannot long abide,  
By pressing youth attack’d on every side;  
If foul, her wealth the lusty lover lures,  
Or else her wit some fool-gallant procures,  
Or else she dances with becoming grace,  
Or shape excuses the defects of face.  
There swims no goose so gray, but, soon or late,  
She finds some honest gander for her mate.

“Horses (thou say’st) and asses men may try,  
And ring suspected vessels ere they buy:



But wives, a random choice, untried they take,  
They dream in courtship, but in wedlock wake:  
Then, nor till then, the veil's removed away,  
And all the woman glares in open day.

“You tell me, to preserve your wife's good grace,  
Your eyes must always languish on my face,  
Your tongue with constant flatteries feed my ear,  
And tag each sentence with, My life! My dear!  
If by strange chance, a modest blush be raised,  
Be sure my fine complexion must be praised.  
My garments always must be new and gay,  
And feasts still kept upon my wedding-day.  
Then must my nurse be pleased, and favourite maid;  
And endless treats, and endless visits paid,  
To a long train of kindred, friends, allies.  
All this thou say'st, and all thou say'st are lies.

“On Jenkin too you cast a squinting eye;  
What! can your 'prentice raise your jealousy?  
Fresh are his ruddy cheeks, his forehead fair,  
And like the burnish'd gold his curling hair.  
But clear thy wrinkled brow, and quit thy sorrow,  
I 'd scorn your 'prentice, should you die to-morrow.

“Why are thy chests all lock'd? on what design?  
Are not thy worldly goods and treasure mine?  
Sir, I 'm no fool; nor shall you, by St. John,  
Have goods and body to yourself alone.  
One you shall quit, in spite of both your eyes —  
I heed not, I, the bolts, the locks, the spies.  
If you had wit, you 'd say, “Go where you will,  
Dear spouse, I credit not the tales they tell:  
Take all the freedoms of a married life;  
I know thee for a virtuous, faithful wife.”

“Lord! when you have enough, what need you care  
How merrily soever others fare?  
Though all the day I give and take delight,  
Doubt not, sufficient will be left at night.



'T is but a just and rational desire,  
To light a taper at a neighbour's fire.

"There 's danger too, you think, in rich array,  
And none can long be modest that are gay.  
The cat, if you but singe her tabby skin,  
The chimney keeps, and sits content within;  
But once grown sleek, will from her corner run,  
Sport with her tail, and wanton in the sun;  
She licks her fair round face, and frisks abroad,  
To show her fur, and to be catterwaw'd."

Lo thus, my friends, I wrought to my desires  
These three right ancient venerable sires.  
I told them, thus you say, and thus you do,  
And told them false, but Jenkin swore 't was true.  
I, like a dog, could bite as well as whine,  
And first complain'd, whene'er the guilt was mine.  
I tax'd them oft with wenching and amours,  
When their weak legs scarce dragg'd them out of doors;  
And swore the rambles that I took by night,  
Were all to spy what damsels they bedight.  
That colour brought me many hours of mirth;  
For all this wit is given us from our birth.  
Heaven gave to women the peculiar grace,  
To spin, to weep, and cully human race.  
By this nice conduct, and this prudent course,  
By murmuring, wheedling, stratagem, and force,  
I still prevail'd, and would be in the right,  
Or curtain-lectures made a restless night.  
If once my husband's arm was o'er my side,  
"What! so familiar with your spouse?" I cried:  
I levied first a tax upon his need:  
Then let him — 't was a nicety indeed!  
Let all mankind this certain maxim hold,  
Marry who will, our sex is to be sold.  
With empty hands no tassels you can lure,  
But fulsome love for gain we can endure;  
For gold we love the impotent and old,



And heave, and pant, and kiss, and cling, for gold.  
Yet with embraces, curses oft I mix'd,  
Then kiss'd again, and chid, and rail'd betwixt.  
Well, I may make my will in peace, and die,  
For not one word in man's arrears am I.  
To drop a dear dispute I was unable,  
E'en though the Pope himself had sat at table.  
But when my point was gain'd, then thus I spoke:  
"Billy, my dear, how sheepishly you look!  
Approach, my spouse, and let me kiss thy cheek.  
Thou shouldst be always thus, resign'd and meek!  
Of Job's great patience since so oft you preach,  
Well should you practise, who so well can teach.  
'T is difficult to do, I must allow,  
But I, my dearest, will instruct you how.  
Great is the blessing of a prudent wife,  
Who puts a period to domestic strife.  
One of us two must rule, and one obey;  
And since in man right reason bears the sway,  
Let that frail thing, weak woman, have her way.  
The wives of all my family have ruled  
Their tender husbands, and their passions cool'd.  
Fie, 't is unmanly thus to sigh and groan;  
What! would you have me to yourself alone?  
Why take me, love! take all and every part!  
Here's your revenge! you love it at your heart.  
Would I vouchsafe to sell what nature gave,  
You little think what custom I could have.  
But see! I'm all your own — nay hold — for shame;  
What means my dear — indeed — you are to blame."  
Thus with my first three lords I pass'd my life;  
A very woman, and a very wife.  
What sums from these old spouses I could raise,  
Procured young husbands in my riper days.  
Though past my bloom, not yet decay'd was I,  
Wanton and wild, and chatter'd like a pie.  
In country dances still I bore the bell,



And sung as sweet as evening Philomel.  
To clear my quailpipe, and refresh my soul,  
Full oft I drain'd the spicy nut-brown bowl;  
Rich luscious wines, that youthful blood improve,  
And warm the swelling veins to feats of love:  
For 't is as sure, as cold engenders hail,  
A liquorish mouth must have a lecherous tail:  
Wine lets no lover unrewarded go,  
As all true gamesters by experience know.

But oh, good gods! whene'er a thought I cast  
On all the joys of youth and beauty pass'd,  
To find in pleasures I have had my part,  
Still warms me to the bottom of my heart.  
'This wicked world was once my dear delight;  
Now, all my conquests, all my charms, good night!  
The flour consumed, the best that now I can,  
Is e'en to make my market of the bran.

My fourth dear spouse was not exceeding true;  
He kept, 't was thought, a private miss or two;  
But all that score I paid — as how? you 'll say,  
Not with my body in a filthy way:  
But I so dress'd, and danced, and drank, and dined,  
And view'd a friend with eyes so very kind,  
As stung his heart, and made his marrow fry  
With burning rage, and frantic jealousy.  
His soul, I hope, enjoys eternal glory,  
For here on earth I was his purgatory.  
Oft, when his shoe the most severely wrung,  
He put on careless airs, and sate and sung.  
How sore I gall'd him, orly Heaven could know,  
And he that felt, and I that caused the woe.  
He died, when last from pilgrimage I came,  
With other gossips, from Jerusalem;  
And now lies buried underneath a rood,  
Fair to be seen, and rear'd of honest wood:  
A tomb indeed, with fewer sculptures graced  
Than that Mausolus' pious widow placed,



Or where inshrined the great Darius lay;  
But cost on graves is merely thrown away.  
The pit fill'd up, with turf we cover'd o'er;  
So bless the good man's soul, I say no more.

Now for my fifth loved lord, the last and best;  
(Kind Heaven afford him everlasting rest!)  
Full hearty was his love, and I can shew  
The tokens on my ribs in black and blue;  
Yet, with a knack, my heart he could have won,  
While yet the smart was shooting in the bone.  
How quaint an appetite in women reigns!  
Free gifts we scorn, and love what costs us pains:  
Let men avoid us, and on them we leap;  
A glutted market makes provision cheap.

In pure good-will I took this jovial spark,  
Of Oxford he, a most egregious clerk.  
He boarded with a widow in the town,  
A trusty gossip, one dame Alison.  
Full well the secrets of my soul she knew,  
Better than e'er our parish priests could do.  
To her I told whatever could befall:  
Had but my husband piss'd against the wall,  
Or done a thing that might have cost his life,  
She — and my niece — and one more worthy wife,  
Had known it all: what most he would conceal;  
To these I made no scruple to reveal.  
Oft has he blush'd from ear to ear for shame,  
That e'er he told a secret to his dame.

It so befell, in holy time of Lent,  
That oft a day I to this gossip went.  
(My husband, thank my stars, was out of town);  
From house to house we rambled up and down,  
This clerk, myself, and my good neighbour Alse,  
To see, be seen, to tell, and gather tales.  
Visits to every church we daily paid,  
And march'd in every holy masquerade,  
The stations duly and the vigils kept;



Not much we fasted, but scarce ever slept.  
At sermons too I shone in scarlet gay;  
The wasting moth ne'er spoil'd my best array;  
The cause was this, I wore it every day.  
'T was when fresh May her early blossoms yields,  
This clerk and I were walking in the fields,  
We grew so intimate, I can't tell how,  
I pawn'd my honour, and engaged my vow,  
If e'er I laid my husband in his urn,  
That he, and only he, should serve my turn.  
We straight struck hands, the bargain was agreed;  
I still have shifts against a time of need:  
The mouse that always trusts to one poor hole,  
Can never be a mouse of any soul.

I vow'd I scarce could sleep since first I knew him,  
And durst be sworn he had bewitch'd me to him;  
If e'er I slept, I dream'd of him alone,  
And dreams foretell, as learned men have shown.  
All this I said; but dreams, sirs, I had none:  
I follow'd but my crafty crony's lore,  
Who bid me tell this lie — and twenty more.

Thus day by day, and month by month we pass'd,  
It pleased the Lord to take my spouse at last.  
I tore my gown, I soil'd my locks with dust,  
And beat my breasts as wretched widows — must.  
Before my face my handkerchief I spread,  
To hide the flood of tears I did — not shed.  
The good man's coffin to the church was borne;  
Around, the neighbours, and my clerk too, mourn.  
But as he march'd, good gods! he show'd a pair  
Of legs and feet, so clean, so strong, so fair!  
Of twenty winters' age he seem'd to be,  
I (to say truth) was twenty more than he:  
But vigorous still, a lively buxom dame;  
And had a wondrous gift to quench a flame.  
A conjuror once, that deeply could divine,  
Assured me, Mars in Taurus was my sign.



As the stars order'd, such my life has been:  
 Alas, alas, that ever love was sin!  
 Fair Venus gave me fire and sprightly grace,  
 And Mars assurance and a dauntless face.  
 By virtue of this powerful constellation,  
 I follow'd always my own inclination.

But to my tale: A month scarce pass'd away,  
 With dance and song we kept the nuptial day,  
 All I possess'd I gave to his command,  
 My goods and chattels, money, house, and land:  
 But oft repented, and repent it still;  
 He proved a rebel to my sovereign will:  
 Nay once, by Heaven, he struck me on the face;  
 Hear but the fact, and judge yourselves the case.

Stubborn as any lioness was I;  
 And knew full well to raise my voice on high;  
 As true a rambler as I was before,  
 And would be so, in spite of all he swore.  
 He against this right sagely would advise,  
 And old examples set before my eyes;  
 Tell how the Roman matrons led their life,  
 Of Gracchus' mother, and Duilius' wife;  
 And close the sermon, as beseem'd his wit,  
 With some grave sentence out of holy writ.  
 Oft would he say, "Who builds his house on sands,  
 Pricks his blind horse across the fallow lands,  
 Or lets his wife abroad with pilgrims roam,  
 Deserves a fool's-cap, and long ears at home."  
 All this avail'd not; for whoe'er he be  
 That tells my faults, I hate him mortally:  
 And so do numbers more, I boldly say,  
 Men, women, clergy, regular and lay.

My spouse (who was, you know, to learning bred)  
 A certain treatise oft at evening read,  
 Where divers authors (whom the devil confound  
 For all their lies!) were in one volume bound.  
 Valerius, whole; and of St. Jerome, part;



Chrysippus and Tertullian, Ovid's Art,  
 Solomon's Proverbs, Eloïsa's loves;  
 And many more than sure the church approves.  
 More legions were there here of wicked wives,  
 Than good in all the Bible and saints' lives.  
 Who drew the lion vanquish'd? 't was a man.  
 But could we women write as scholars can,  
 Men should stand mark'd with far more wickedness,  
 Than all the sons of Adam could redress.  
 Love seldom haunts the breast where learning lies,  
 And Venus sets ere Mercury can rise.  
 Those play the scholars, who can't play the men,  
 And use that weapon which they have, their pen;  
 When old, and past the relish of delight,  
 Then down they sit, and in their dotage write,  
 That not one woman keeps her marriage vow.  
 (This by the way, but to my purpose now).

It chanced my husband, on a winter's night,  
 Read in this book, aloud, with strange delight,  
 How the first female (as the Scriptures show)  
 Brought her own spouse and all his race to woe.  
 How Samson fell; and he whom Dejanire  
 Wrapp'd in the envenom'd shirt, and set on fire.  
 How cursed Eriphyle her lord betray'd,  
 And the dire ambush Clytemnestra laid.  
 But what most pleased him was the Cretan Dame,  
 And Husband-bull — oh monstrous! fie for shame!

He had by heart the whole detail of woe  
 Xantippe made her good man undergo;  
 How oft she scolded in a day he knew,  
 How many piss-pots on the sage she threw,  
 Who took it patiently, and wiped his head;  
 "Rain follows thunder," — that was all he said.

He read, how Arius to his friend complain'd,  
 A fatal tree was growing in his land,  
 On which three wives successively had twined  
 A sliding noose, and waver'd in the wind.



“Where grows this plant,” replied the friend, “oh where?  
For better fruit did never orchard bear:  
Give me some slip of this most blissful tree,  
And in my garden planted shall it be.”

Then how two wives their lords' destruction prove,  
Through hatred one, and one through too much love;  
That for her husband mix'd a poisonous draught,  
And this for lust an amorous philtre bought:  
The nimble juice soon seized his giddy head,  
Frantic at night, and in the morning dead.  
How some with swords their sleeping lords have slain,  
And some have hammer'd nails into their brain,  
And some have drench'd them with a deadly potion;  
All this he read, and read with great devotion.

Long time I heard, and swell'd, and blush'd, and frown'd:  
But when no end of these vile tales I found,  
When still he read, and laugh'd, and read again,  
And half the night was thus consumed in vain;  
Provoked to vengeance, three large leaves I tore,  
And with one buffet fell'd him on the floor.  
With that my husband in a fury rose,  
And down he settled me with hearty blows.  
I groan'd, and lay extended on my side.  
“Oh! thou hast slain me for my wealth,” I cried.  
“Yet I forgive thee — take my last embrace —”  
He wept, kind soul! and stoop'd to kiss my face;  
I took him such a box as turn'd him blue,  
Then sigh'd, and cried, “Adieu, my dear, adieu!”

But after many a hearty struggle pass'd,  
I condescended to be pleased at last.  
Soon as he said, “My mistress and my wife,  
Do what you list, the term of all your life;”  
I took to heart the merits of the cause,  
And stood content to rule by wholesome laws;  
Received the reins of absolute command,  
With all the government of house and land,  
And empire o'er his tongue, and o'er his hand.



As for the volume that reviled the dames,  
'T was torn to fragments, and condemn'd to flames.

Now Heaven on all my husbands gone bestow  
Pleasures above for tortures felt below:  
That rest they wish'd for, grant them in the grave,  
And bless those souls my conduct help'd to save!

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# IMITATIONS OF ENGLISH POETS.

*Done by the Author in his Youth.*

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CHAUCE R.

WOMEN ben full of ragerie,  
Yet swinken nat sans secresie.  
Thilke moral shall ye understond,  
From schoole-boy's tale of fayre Ireland:  
Which to the fennes hath him betake,  
To filch the gray ducke fro the lake.  
Right then, there passen by the way  
His aunt, and eke her daughters tway.  
Ducke in his trowsers hath he hent,  
Not to be spied of ladies gent.  
"But ho! our nephew," crieth one,  
"Ho!" quoth another, "cozen John;"  
And stoppen, and lough, and callen out, —  
This silly clerke full low doth lout:  
They asken that, and talken this,  
"Lo! here is coz, and here is miss."  
But, as he glozeth with speeches soote,  
The ducke sore tickleth his erse roote:  
Fore-piece and buttons all to-brest,  
Forth thrust a white neck, and red crest.  
"Te-he," cried ladies; clerke nought spake:  
Miss stared, and gray ducke cryeth, "Quaake."  
"O moder, moder," quoth the daughter,  
"Be thilke same thing maids longen a'ter?  
Bette is to pine on coals and chalke,  
Then trust on mon, whose yerde can talke."

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## S P E N S E R.

## THE ALLEY.

IN every town where Thamis rolls his tyde,  
 A narrow pass there is with houses low;  
 Where, ever and anon, the stream is eyed,  
 And many a boat, soft sliding to and fro.  
 There oft are heard the notes of infant woe,  
 The short thick sob, loud scream, and shriller squall:  
 How can ye, mothers, vex your children so?  
 Some play, some eat, some cack against the wall,  
 And as they crouchen low, for bread and butter call.

And on the broken pavement, here and there,  
 Doth many a stinking sprat and herring lie;  
 A brandy and tobacco shop is near,  
 And hens, and dogs, and hogs are feeding by;  
 And here a sailor's jacket hangs to dry.  
 At every door are sun-burnt matrons seen,  
 Mending old nets to catch the scaly fry,  
 Now singing shrill, and scolding eft between;  
 Scolds answer foul-mouth'd scolds; bad neighbourhood I  
                   ween.

The snappish cur (the passenger's annoy)  
 Close at my heel with yelping treble flies;  
 The whimpering girl, and hoarser screaming boy,  
 Join to the yelping treble, shrilling cries;  
 The scolding quean to louder notes doth rise,  
 And her full pipes those shrilling cries confound;  
 To her full pipes the grunting hog replies;  
 The grunting hogs alarm the neighbours round,  
 And curs, girls, boys, and scolds, in the deep base are drown'd.

Hard by a sty, beneath a roof of thatch,  
 Dwelt Obloquy, who in her early days  
 Baskets of fish at Billingsgate did watch,



Cod, whiting, oyster, mackrel, sprat, or plaice:  
 There learn'd she speech from tongues that never cease.  
 Slander beside her, like a magpie, chatters,  
 With Envy (spitting cat), dread foe to peace;  
 Like a cursed cur, Malice before her clatters,  
 And, vexing every wight, tears clothes and all to tatters.

Her dugs were mark'd by every collier's hand,  
 Her mouth was black as bull-dog's at the stall:  
 She scratched, bit, and spared ne lace ne band,  
 And bitch and rogue her answer was to all;  
 Nay, e'en the parts of shame by name would call;  
 Yea, when she passed by or lane or nook,  
 Would greet the man who turn'd him to the wall,  
 And by his hand obscene the porter took,  
 Nor ever did askance like modest virgin look.

Such place hath Deptford, navy-building town,  
 Woolwich and Wapping, smelling strong of pitch:  
 Such Lambeth, envy of each band and gown;  
 And Twickenham such, which fairer scenes enrich,  
 Grots, statues, urns, and Jo—n's dog and bitch.  
 Ne village is without, on either side,  
 All up the silver Thames, or all adown;  
 Ne Richmond's self, from whose tall front are eyed  
 Vales, spires, meandering streams, and Windsor's towery  
 pride.

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## WALLER.

### OF A LADY SINGING TO HER LUTE.

FAIR charmer, cease, nor make your voice's prize  
 A heart resign'd the conquest of your eyes:  
 Well might, alas! that threaten'd vessel fail,  
 Which winds and lightning both at once assail.  
 We were too bless'd with these enchanting lays,  
 Which must be heavenly when an angel plays;



But killing charms your lover's death contrive,  
 Lest heavenly music should be heard alive.  
 Orpheus could charm the trees; but thus a tree,  
 Taught by your hand, can charm no less than he:  
 A poet made the silent wood pursue,  
 This vocal wood had drawn the poet too.

---

ON A FAN OF THE AUTHOR'S DESIGN,  
*In which was painted the Story of Cephalus and Procris, with  
 the Motto, "Aura veni."*

"COME, gentle air!" the Æolian shepherd said,  
 While Procris panted in the secret shade;  
 "Come, gentle air," the fairer Delia cries,  
 While at her feet her swain expiring lies.  
 Lo, the glad gales o'er all her beauties stray,  
 Breathe on her lips, and in her bosom play!  
 In Delia's hand this toy is fatal found,  
 Nor could that fabled dart more surely wound:  
 Both gifts destructive to the givers prove;  
 Alike both lovers fall by those they love.  
 Yet guiltless too this bright destroyer lives,  
 At random wounds, nor knows the wound she gives;  
 She views the story with attentive eyes,  
 And pities Procris, while her lover dies.

---

C O W L E Y.

THE GARDEN.

FAIN would my Muse the flowery treasure sing,  
 And humble glories of the youthful spring:  
 Where opening roses breathing sweets diffuse.  
 And soft carnations shower their balmy dews;



Where lilies smile in virgin robes of white,  
The thin undress of superficial light,  
And varied tulips show so dazzling gay,  
Blushing in bright diversities of day.  
Each painted floweret in the lake below  
Surveys its beauties, whence its beauties grow;  
And pale Narcissus on the bank, in vain  
Transformed, gazes on himself again.  
Here aged trees cathedral walks compose,  
And mount the hill in venerable rows;  
There the green infants in their beds are laid,  
The garden's hope, and its expected shade.  
Here orange-trees with blooms and pendants shine,  
And vernal honours to their autumn join;  
Exceed their promise in their ripen'd store,  
Yet in the rising blossom promise more.  
There in bright drops the crystal fountains play,  
By laurels shielded from the piercing day;  
Where Daphne, now a tree, as once a maid,  
Still from Apollo vindicates her shade,  
Still turns her beauties from the invading beam,  
Nor seeks in vain for succour to the stream;  
The stream at once preserves her virgin leaves,  
At once a shelter from her boughs receives,  
Where summer's beauty midst of winter stays,  
And winter's coolness spite of summer's rays.

---

## W E E P I N G.

WHILE Celia's tears make sorrow bright,  
Proud grief sits swelling in her eyes:  
The sun, next those the fairest light,  
Thus from the ocean first did rise:  
And thus through mists we see the sun,  
Which else we durst not gaze upon.



These silver drops, like morning dew,  
 Foretell the fervour of the day:  
 So from one cloud soft showers we view,  
 And blasting lightnings burst away.  
 The stars that fall from Celia's eye,  
 Declare our doom is drawing nigh.

The baby in that sunny sphere  
 So like a Phaëton appears,  
 That heaven, the threaten'd world, to spare  
 Thought fit to drown him in her tears:  
 Else might the ambitious nymph aspire  
 To set, like him, heaven too on fire.

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## E. OF ROCHESTER.

### ON SILENCE.

SILENCE! coeval with eternity,  
 Thou wert, ere nature's self began to be;  
 'T was one vast nothing, all, and all slept fast in thee.

Thine was the sway, ere heaven was form'd, or earth,  
 Ere fruitful thought conceived creation's birth,  
 Or midwife word gave aid, and spoke the infant forth.

Then various elements against thee join'd,  
 In one more various animal combined,  
 And framed the clamorous race of busy human-kind.

The tongue moved gently first, and speech was low,  
 Till wrangling science taught it noise and show,  
 And wicked wit arose, thy most abusive foe.

But rebel wit deserts thee oft in vain;  
 Lost in the maze of words he turns again,  
 And seeks a surer state, and courts thy gentle reign.



Afflicted sense thou kindly dost set free,  
Oppress'd with argumental tyranny,  
And routed reason finds a safe retreat in thee.

With thee in private modest dulness lies,  
And in thy bosom lurks in thought's disguise;  
Thou varnisher of fools, and cheat of all the wise!

Yet thy indulgence is by both confess'd;  
Folly by thee lies sleeping in the breast,  
And 't is in thee at last that wisdom seeks for rest.

Silence, the knave's repute, the whore's good name,  
The only honour of the wishing dame;  
Thy very want of tongue makes thee a kind of fame.

But couldst thou seize some tongues that now are free,  
How church and state should be obliged to thee;  
At senate, and at bar, how welcome wouldst thou be!

Yet speech e'en there submissively withdraws,  
From rights of subjects, and the poor man's cause:  
Then pompous Silence reigns, and stills the noisy laws.

Past services of friends, good deeds of foes,  
What favourites gain, and what the nation owes,  
Fly the forgetful world, and in thy arms repose.

The country wit, religion of the town,  
The courtier's learning, policy of the gown,  
Are best by thee express'd; and shine in thee alone.

The parson's cant, the lawyer's sophistry,  
Lord's quibble, critic's jest, all end in thee,  
All rest in peace at last, and sleep eternally.

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## E. OF DORSET.

## ARTEMISIA.

THOUGH Artemisia talks, by fits,  
 Of councils, classics, fathers, wits;  
     Reads Malbranche, Boyle, and Locke;  
 Yet in some things methinks she fails;  
 'T were well if she would pare her nails,  
     And wear a cleaner smock.

Haughty and huge as High-Dutch bride,  
 Such nastiness, and so much pride,  
     Are oddly join'd by fate:  
 On her large squab you find her spread,  
 Like a fat corpse upon a bed,  
     That lies and stinks in state.

She wears no colours (sign of grace)  
 On any part except her face;  
     All white and black beside:  
 Dauntless her look: her gesture proud,  
 Her voice theatrically loud,  
     And masculine her stride.

So have I seen, in black and white,  
 A prating thing, a magpye hight,  
     Majestically stalk;  
 A stately, worthless animal,  
 That plies the tongue, and wags the tail,  
     All flutter, pride, and talk.

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## P H R Y N E.

PHRYNE had talents for mankind,  
 Open she was, and unconfined,  
     Like some free port of trade;



Merchants unloaded here their freight,  
And agents from each foreign state  
Here first their entry made.

Her learning and good-breeding such,  
Whether the Italian or the Dutch,  
Spaniards or French came to her;  
To all obliging she'd appear:  
'T was "Si Signior," 't was "Yaw Mynheer,"  
'T was "S'il vous plait, Monsieur."

Obscure by birth, renown'd by crimes,  
Still changing names, religion, climes,  
At length she turns a bride:  
In diamonds, pearls, and rich brocades,  
She shines the first of batter'd jades,  
And flutters in her pride.

So have I known those insects fair  
(Which curious Germans hold so rare)  
Still vary shapes and dyes;  
Still gain new titles with new forms;  
First grubs obscene, then wriggling worms,  
Then painted butterflies.

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DR. SWIFT.

THE HAPPY LIFE OF A COUNTRY PARSON.

PARSON, these things in thy possessing,  
Are better than the bishop's blessing:  
A wife that makes conserves; a steed  
That carries double when there's need:  
October store, and best Virginia,  
Tithe pig, and mortuary guinea:  
Gazettes sent gratis down, and frank'd,  
For which thy patron's weekly thank'd;



A large Concordance, bound long since;  
Sermons to Charles the First, when prince:  
A Chronicle of ancient standing;  
A Chrysostom to smooth — thy band in:  
The Polyglott — three parts — my text,  
Howbeit, — likewise — now to my next:  
Lo here the Septuagint, — and Paul,  
To sum the whole, — the close of all.

He that has these, may pass his life,  
Drink with the 'squire, and kiss his wife;  
On Sundays preach, and eat his fill;  
And fast on Fridays — if he will;  
Toast church and queen, explain the news,  
Talk with church-wardens about pews;  
Pray heartily for some new gift,  
And shake his head at Doctor Sw\*\*t.

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# AN ESSAY ON MAN,

IN FOUR EPISTLES

TO H. ST. JOHN, LORD BOLINGBROKE.

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## THE DESIGN.

HAVING proposed to write some pieces on human life and manners, such as (to use my Lord Bacon's expression) "come home to men's business and bosoms," I thought it more satisfactory to begin with considering man in the abstract, his nature, and his state: since, to prove any moral duty, to enforce any moral precept, or to examine the perfection or imperfection of any creature whatsoever, it is necessary first to know what condition and relation it is placed in, and what is the proper end and purpose of its being.

The science of human nature is, like all other sciences, reduced to a few clear points: there are not many certain truths in this world. It is therefore in the anatomy of the mind as in that of the body; more good will accrue to mankind by attending to the large, open, and perceptible parts, than by studying too much such finer nerves and vessels, the conformations and uses of which will for ever escape our observation. The disputes are all upon these last; and I will venture to say, they have less sharpened the wits than the hearts of men against each other, and have diminished the practice more than advanced the theory of morality. If I could flatter myself that this Essay has any merit, it is in steering betwixt the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over terms utterly unintelligible, and in forming a temperate yet not inconsistent, and a short, yet not imperfect, system of ethics.



This I might have done in prose; but I chose verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons. The one will appear obvious; that principles, maxims, or precepts so written, both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards: the other may seem odd, but it is true; I found I could express them more shortly this way than in prose itself; and nothing is more certain, than that much of the force, as well as the grace of arguments or instructions, depends on their conciseness. I was unable to treat this part of my subject more in detail, without becoming dry and tedious; or more poetically, without sacrificing perspicuity to ornament, without wandering from the precision, or breaking the chain of reasoning: if any man can unite all these without diminution of any of them, I freely confess he will compass a thing above my capacity.

What is now published, is only to be considered as a general map of man, marking out no more than the greater parts, their extent, their limits, and their connexion, but leaving the particular to be more fully delineated in the charts which are to follow. Consequently, these Epistles in their progress (if I have health and leisure to make any progress) will be less dry, and more susceptible of poetical ornament. I am here only opening the fountains, and clearing the passage. To deduce the rivers, to follow them in their course, and to observe their effects, may be a task more agreeable.

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# AN ESSAY ON MAN.

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## ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE I.

*Of the Nature and State of Man with respect to the Universe.*

Of man in the abstract. — I. That we can judge only with regard to our own system, being ignorant of the relations of systems and things, ver. 17, &c. II. That man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a being suited to his place and rank in the creation, agreeably to the general order of things, and conformably to ends and relations to him unknown, ver. 35, &c. III. That it is partly upon his ignorance of future events, and partly upon the hope of a future state, that all his happiness in the present depends, ver. 77, &c. IV. The pride of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of man's error and misery. The impiety of putting himself in the place of God, and judging of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice, of his dispensations, ver. 109, &c. V. The absurdity of conceiving himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world, which is not in the natural, ver. 131, &c. VI. The unreasonableness of his complaints against Providence, while on the one hand he demands the perfections of the angels, and on the other the bodily qualifications of the brutes; though to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree, would render him miserable, ver. 173, &c. VII. That throughout the whole visible world, an universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to man. The gradations of sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason; that reason alone countervails all the other faculties, ver. 207. VIII. How much farther this order and subordination of living creatures may extend above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation must be destroyed, ver. 233. IX. The extravagance, madness, and pride of such a desire, ver. 250. X. The consequence of all the absolute submission due to Providence, both as to our present and future state, ver. 281, to the end.

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## EPISTLE I.

AWAKE, my St. John! leave all meaner things  
 To low ambition, and the pride of kings.  
 Let us (since life can little more supply  
 Than just to look about us, and to die)  
 Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man;  
 A mighty maze! but not without a plan:  
 A wild, where weeds and flowers promiscuous shoot;  
 Or garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.  
 Together let us beat this ample field,  
 Try what the open, what the covert yield;  
 The latent tracts, the giddy heights, explore  
 Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar;  
 Eye nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies,  
 And catch the manners living as they rise:  
 Laugh where we must, be candid where we can,  
 But vindicate the ways of God to man.

I. Say first, of God above, or man below,  
 What can we reason, but from what we know?  
 Of man, what see we but his station here,  
 From which to reason, or to which refer?  
 Through worlds unnumber'd though the God be known,  
 'T is ours to trace him only in our own.  
 He, who through vast immensity can pierce,  
 See worlds on worlds compose one universe,  
 Observe how system into system runs,  
 What other planets circle other suns,  
 What varied being peoples every star,  
 May tell why Heaven has made us as we are.  
 But of this frame the bearings and the ties,  
 The strong connexions, nice dependencies,  
 Gradations just, has thy prevading soul  
 Look'd through? or can a part contain the whole?

Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,  
 And drawn supports, upheld by God, or thee?



II. Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou find,  
 Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?  
 First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,  
 Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less?  
 Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made  
 Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade? 40  
 Or ask of yonder argent fields above,  
 Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove?

Of systems possible, if 't is confess'd,  
 That wisdom infinite must form the best,  
 Where all must full or not coherent be,  
 And all that rises, rise in due degree;  
 Then, in the scale of reasoning life, 't is plain,  
 There must be somewhere, such a rank as man:  
 And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)  
 Is only this, if God has placed him wrong? 50

Respecting man, whatever wrong we call  
 May, must be right, as relative to all.  
 In human works, though labour'd on with pain,  
 A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain:  
 In God's, one single can its end produce;  
 Yet serves to second too some other use.  
 So man, who here seems principal alone,  
 Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,  
 Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal:  
 'T is but a part we see, and not a whole. 60

When the proud steed shall know why man restrains  
 His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;  
 When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,  
 Is now a victim, and now Egypt's god:  
 Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend  
 His actions', passions', being's, use and end;  
 Why doing, suffering, check'd, impell'd; and why  
 This hour a slave, the next a deity.

Then say not man's imperfect, Heaven in fault;  
 Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought; 70  
 His knowledge measured to his state and place;



His time a moment, and a point his space.  
 If to be perfect in a certain sphere,  
 What matter, soon or late, or here, or there?  
 The bless'd to-day is as completely so,  
 As who began a thousand years ago.

III. Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate,  
 All but the page prescribed, their present state:  
 From brutes what men, from men what spirits know:  
 Or who could suffer being here below?  
 The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,  
 Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?  
 Pleased to the last, he crops the flowery food,  
 And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.  
 Oh blindness to the future! kindly given,  
 That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heaven:  
 Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,  
 A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,  
 Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,  
 And now a bubble burst, and now a world.

Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;  
 Wait the great teacher, Death; and God adore.  
 What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,  
 But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.  
 Hope springs eternal in the human breast;  
 Man never Is, but always To be bless'd:  
 The soul, uneasy, and confined from home,  
 Rests and expatiates on a life to come.

Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind  
 Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;  
 His soul proud science never taught to stray  
 Far as the solar walk, or milky way;  
 Yet simple nature to his hope has given,  
 Behind the cloud-topp'd hill, an humbler heaven;  
 Some safer world in depth of woods embraced,  
 Some happier island in the watery waste,  
 Where slaves once more their native land behold,  
 No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.



To be, contents his natural desire,  
 He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire; 110  
 But thinks admitted to that equal sky,  
 His faithful dog shall bear him company.

IV. Go, wiser thou! and in thy scale of sense,  
 Weigh thy opinion against Providence;  
 Call imperfection what thou fanciest such;  
 Say, here he gives too little, there too much:  
 Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,  
 Yet say, if man's unhappy, God's unjust;  
 If man alone engross not Heaven's high care,  
 Alone made perfect here, immortal there: 120  
 Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,  
 Re-judge his justice, be the god of God.  
 In pride, in reasoning pride, our error lies;  
 All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.  
 Pride still is aiming at the bless'd abodes,  
 Men would be angels, angels would be gods.  
 Aspiring to be gods, if angels fell,  
 Aspiring to be angels, men rebel:  
 And who but wishes to invert the laws  
 Of order, sins against the Eternal Cause. 130

V. Ask for what end the heavenly bodies shine,  
 Earth for whose use? Pride answers, "'T is for mine:  
 For me kind nature wakes her genial power;  
 Suckles each herb, and spreads out every flower;  
 Annual for me, the grape, the rose, renew  
 The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;  
 For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;  
 For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;  
 Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;  
 My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies.' 140

But errs not nature from this gracious end,  
 From burning suns when livid deaths descend,  
 When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep  
 Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?  
 "No," 't is replied, "the first Almighty Cause



Acts not by partial, but by general laws;  
 The exceptions few; some change since all began:  
 And what created perfect?" — Why then man?  
 If the great end be human happiness,  
 Then nature deviates; and can man do less?  
 As much that end a constant course requires  
 Of showers and sun-shine, as of man's desires;  
 As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,  
 As men for ever temperate, calm, and wise.  
 If plagues or earthquakes break not Heaven's design,  
 Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline?  
 Who knows, but he whose hand the lightning forms,  
 Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms;  
 Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,  
 Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?  
 From pride, from pride, our very reasoning springs;  
 Account for moral as for natural things:  
 Why charge we Heaven in those, in these acquit?  
 In both, to reason right is to submit.

Better for us, perhaps, it might appear,  
 Were there all harmony, all virtue here;  
 That never air or ocean felt the wind,  
 That never passion discomposed the mind.  
 But all subsists by elemental strife;  
 And passions are the elements of life.  
 The general order, since the whole began,  
 Is kept in nature, and is kept in man.

VI. What would this man? Now upward will he soar,  
 And, little less than angel, would be more;  
 Now looking downwards, just as grieved appears  
 To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.  
 Made for his use all creatures if he call,  
 Say what their use, had he the powers of all?  
 Nature to these, without profusion, kind,  
 The proper organs, proper powers assign'd;  
 Each seeming want compensated of course,  
 Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;



All in exact proportion to the state;  
 Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.  
 Each beast, each insect, happy in its own:  
 Is Heaven unkind to man, and man alone?  
 Shall he alone, whom rational we call,  
 Be pleased with nothing, if not bless'd with all?

The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)  
 Is not to act or think beyond mankind; 190  
 No powers of body or of soul to share,  
 But what his nature and his state can bear.  
 Why has not man a microscopic eye?  
 For this plain reason, man is not a fly.  
 Say what the use, were finer optics given,  
 To inspect a mite, not comprehend the heaven?  
 Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,  
 To smart and agonize at every pore?  
 Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,  
 Die of a rose in aromatic pain? 200  
 If Nature thunder'd in his opening ears,  
 And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,  
 How would he wish that Heaven had left him still  
 The whispering zephyr, and the purling rill!  
 Who finds not Providence all good and wise,  
 Alike in what it gives, and what denies?

VII. Far as creation's ample range extends,  
 The scale of sensual, mental, powers ascends:  
 Mark how it mounts to man's imperial race,  
 From the green myriads in the peopled grass: 210  
 What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,  
 The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam;  
 Of smell, the headlong lioness between,  
 And hound sagacious on the tainted green;  
 Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood,  
 To that which warbles through the vernal wood!  
 The spider's touch how exquisitely fine!  
 Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:  
 In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true,



From poisonous herbs extracts the healing dew! 220  
 How instinct varies in the grovelling swine,  
 Compared, half-reasoning elephant, with thine!  
 'Twixt that and reason what a nice barrier;  
 For ever separate, yet for ever near!  
 Remembrance and reflection how allied;  
 What thin partitions sense from thought divide!  
 And middle natures, how they long to join,  
 Yet never pass the insuperable line!  
 Without this just gradation, could they be  
 Subjected, these to those, or all to thee? 230  
 The powers of all subdued by thee alone,  
 Is not thy reason all these powers in one?

VIII. See, through this air, this ocean, and this earth,  
 All matter quick, and bursting into birth.  
 Above, how high progressive life may go!  
 Around, how wide! how deep extend below,  
 Vast chain of being! which from God began,  
 Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,  
 Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,  
 No glass can reach; from infinite to thee, 240  
 From thee to nothing. — On superior powers  
 Were we to press, inferior might on ours;  
 Or in the full creation leave a void,  
 Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:  
 From nature's chain whatever link you strike,  
 Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And, if each system in gradation roll  
 Alike essential to the amazing whole,  
 The least confusion but in one, not all  
 That system only, but the whole must fall. 250  
 Let earth unbalanced from her orbit fly.  
 Planets and suns run lawless through the sky;  
 Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,  
 Being on being wreck'd, and world on world;  
 Heaven's whole foundations to their centre nod,  
 And nature trembles to the throne of God.



All this dread order break — for whom? for thee?  
Vile worm! — oh madness! pride! impiety!

IX. What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,  
Or hand, to toil, aspired to be the head? 260  
What if the head, the eye, or ear, repined  
To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?  
Just as absurd for any part to claim  
To be another in this general frame:  
Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains  
The great directing Mind of all ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;  
That, changed through all, and yet in all the same;  
Great in the earth, as in the ethereal frame; 270  
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
Glow in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;  
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,  
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;  
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,  
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;  
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,  
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:  
To him no high, no low, no great, no small;  
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all. 280

X. Cease then, nor order imperfection name:  
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.  
Know thy own point: this kind, this due degree  
Of blindness, weakness, Heaven bestows on thee.  
Submit. — In this, or any other sphere,  
Secure to be as bless'd as thou canst bear:  
Safe in the hand of one disposing Power,  
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.  
All nature is but art, unknown to thee;  
All chance, direction which thou canst not see; 290  
All discord, harmony not understood;  
All partial evil, universal good.  
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,  
One truth is clear, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.



## ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE II.

*On the Nature and State of Man with respect to himself, as an Individual.*

- I. The business of man not to pry into God, but to study himself. His middle nature; his powers and frailties, ver. 1 to 19. The limits of his capacity, ver. 19, &c. II. The two principles of man, self-love and reason, both necessary, ver. 53, &c. self-love the stronger, and why, ver. 67, &c. Their end the same, ver. 81, &c. III. The passions, and their use, ver. 93 to 130. The predominant passion, and its force, ver. 132 to 160. Its necessity, in directing men to different purposes, ver. 165, &c. Its providential use, in fixing our principle, and ascertaining our virtue, ver. 177. IV. Virtue and vice joined in our mixed nature; the limits near, yet the things separate and evident: what is the office of reason, ver. 202 to 216. V. How odious vice in itself, and how we deceive ourselves into it, ver. 217. VI. That, however, the ends of Providence and general good are answered in our passions and imperfections, ver. 238, &c. How usefully these are distributed to all orders of men, ver. 241. How useful they are to society, ver. 251. And to individuals, ver. 263. In every state, and every age of life, ver. 273, &c.

## EPISTLE II.

I. Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;  
 The proper study of mankind is man.  
 Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,  
 A being darkly wise, and rudely great:  
 With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,  
 With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,  
 He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;  
 In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast;  
 In doubt his mind or body to prefer;  
 Born but to die, and reasoning but to err;  
 Alike in ignorance, his reason such,  
 Whether he thinks too little or too much:  
 Chaos of thought and passion, all confused;  
 Still by himself abused or disabused;  
 Created half to rise, and half to fall;



Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;  
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd:  
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!

Go, wondrous creature! mount where science guides,  
Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides; 20  
Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,  
Correct old time, and regulate the sun;  
Go, soar with Plato to the empyreal sphere,  
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair;  
Or tread the mazy round his followers trod,  
And quitting sense call imitating God;  
As Eastern priests in giddy circles run,  
And turn their heads to imitate the sun.  
Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule —  
Then drop into thyself, and be a fool! 30

Superior beings, when of late they saw  
A mortal man unfold all nature's law,  
Admired such wisdom in an earthly shape,  
And show'd a Newton as we show an ape.

Could he, whose rules the rapid comet bind,  
Describe or fix one movement of his mind?  
Who saw its fires here rise, and there descend,  
Explain his own beginning or his end?  
Alas, what wonder! Man's superior part  
Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art; 40  
But when his own great work is but begun,  
What reason weaves, by passion is undone.

Trace science then, with modesty thy guide;  
First strip off all her equipage of pride;  
Deduct what is but vanity or dress,  
Or learning's luxury, or idleness;  
Or tricks to show the stretch of human brain,  
Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain;  
Expunge the whole, or lop the excrescent parts  
Of all our vices have created arts; 50  
Then see how little the remaining sum,  
Which served the past, and must the times to come!



II. Two principles in human nature reign;  
 Self-love to urge, and reason to restrain;  
 Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call,  
 Each works its end, to move or govern all:  
 And to their proper operation still,  
 Ascribe all good, to their improper, ill.

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;  
 Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.  
 Man, but for that, no action could attend,  
 And, but for this, were active to no end:  
 Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,  
 To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot;  
 Or, meteor-like, flame lawless through the void,  
 Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

60

Most strength the moving principle requires;  
 Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires.  
 Sedate and quiet the comparing lies,  
 Form'd but to check, deliberate, and advise.  
 Self-love, still stronger, as its objects nigh;  
 Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie:  
 That sees immediate good by present sense;  
 Reason, the future and the consequence.  
 Thicker than arguments temptations throng,  
 At best more watchful this, but that more strong.  
 The action of the stronger to suspend,  
 Reason still use, to reason still attend.

70

Attention habit and experience gains;  
 Each strengthens reason, and self-love restrains.  
 Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,  
 More studious to divide than to unite;  
 And grace and virtue, sense and reason split,  
 With all the rash dexterity of wit.  
 Wits, just like fools, at war about a name,  
 Have full as oft no meaning, or the same.  
 Self-love and reason to one end aspire,  
 Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire;  
 But greedy, that its object would devour,

80



This taste the honey, and not wound the flower: 90

X Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,  
Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

III. Modes of self-love the passions we may call;

'T is real good, or seeming, moves them all:

But since not every good we can divide,

And reason bids us for our own provide;

Passions, though selfish, if their means be fair,

List under reason, and deserve her care;

Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,

Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name. 100

In lazy apathy let stoics boast

Their virtue fix'd; 't is fix'd as in a frost;

Contracted all, retiring to the breast;

But strength of mind is exercise, not rest:

The rising tempest puts in act the soul;

Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.

On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,

Reason the card, but passion is the gale;

Nor God alone in the still calm we find,

He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind. 110

X Passions, like elements, though born to fight,

Yet, mix'd and soften'd, in his work unite:

These 't is enough to temper and employ;

But what composes man, can man destroy?

Suffice that reason keep to nature's road,

Subject, compound them, follow her and God.

Love, hope, and joy, fair pleasure's smiling train;

Hate, fear, and grief, the family of pain;

These mix'd with art, and to due bounds confined,

Make and maintain the balance of the mind: 120

The lights and shades, whose well-accorded strife

Gives all the strength and colour of our life.

X Pleasures are ever in our hands and eyes;

And when in act they cease, in prospect rise:

Present to grasp, and future still to find,

X The whole employ of body and of mind.



All spread their charms, but charm not all alike;  
 On different senses, different objects strike:  
 Hence different passions more or less inflame,  
 As strong or weak, the organs of the frame; 130  
 And hence one master passion in the breast,  
 Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

As man, perhaps, the moment of his breath,  
 Receives the lurking principle of death;  
 The young disease, which must subdue at length,  
 Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength:  
 So, cast and mingled with his very frame,  
 The mind's disease, its ruling passion came;  
 Each vital humour, which should feed the whole,  
 Soon flows to this, in body and in soul: 140  
 Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,  
 As the mind opens, and its functions spread,  
 Imagination plies her dangerous art,  
 And pours it all upon the peccant part.

Nature its mother, habit is its nurse;  
 Wit, spirit, faculties, but make it worse;  
 Reason itself but gives it edge and power;  
 As Heaven's blest beam turns vinegar more sour.

We, wretched subjects, though to lawful sway,  
 In this weak queen some favourite still obey; 150  
 Ah! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,  
 What can she more than tell us we are fools?  
 Teach us to mourn our nature, not to mend;  
 A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend!  
 Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade  
 The choice we make, or justify it made;  
 Proud of an easy conquest all along,  
 She but removes weak passions for the strong;  
 So, when small humours gather to a gout,  
 The doctor fancies he has driven them out. 160

Yes, nature's road must ever be preferr'd;  
 Reason is here no guide, but still a guard:  
 'T is hers to rectify, not overthrow,



And treat this passion more as friend than foe:  
 A mightier power the strong direction sends,  
 And several men impels to several ends:  
 Like varying winds by other passions toss'd,  
 This drives them constant to a certain coast.  
 Let power or knowledge, gold or glory, please,  
 Or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease; 170  
 Through life 't is follow'd, e'en at life's expense;  
 The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,  
 The monk's humility, the hero's pride,  
 All, all alike, find reason on their side.

The Eternal Art, educing good from ill,  
 Grafts on this passion our best principle:  
 'T is thus the mercury of man is fix'd,  
 Strong grows the virtue with his nature mix'd;  
 The dross cements what else were too refined,  
 And in one interest body acts with mind. 180

As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,  
 On savage stocks inserted learn to bear;  
 The surest virtues thus from passions shoot,  
 Wild nature's vigour working at the root.  
 What crops of wit and honesty appear  
 From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!  
 See anger, zeal and fortitude supply:  
 E'en avarice, prudence; sloth, philosophy;  
 Lust, through some certain strainers well refined,  
 Is gentle love, and charms all womankind; 190  
 Envy, to which the ignoble mind's a slave,  
 Is emulation in the learn'd or brave;  
 Nor virtue, male or female, can we name,  
 But what will grow on pride, or grow on shame.

Thus Nature gives us (let it check our pride)  
 The virtue nearest to our vice allied:  
 Reason the bias turns to good from ill,  
 And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.  
 The fiery soul abhorr'd in Catiline,  
 In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine: 200



+ The same ambition can destroy or save,  
And makes a patriot as it makes a knave.

IV. This light and darkness in our chaos join'd,  
What shall divide? The God within the mind.

Extremes in nature equal ends produce,  
In man they join to some mysterious use;  
Though each by turns the other's bounds invade,  
As, in some well-wrought picture, light and shade,  
And oft so mix, the difference is too nice  
Where ends the virtue, or begins the vice.

210

Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,  
That vice or virtue there is none at all.  
If white and black blend, soften, and unite  
A thousand ways, is there no black or white?  
Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain;  
'T is to mistake them, costs the time and pain.

+ V. Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,  
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;  
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

220

But where the extreme of vice, was ne'er agreed:  
Ask where 's the north? at York, 't is on the Tweed;  
In Scotland, at the Orcades; and there,  
At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.  
No creature owns it in the first degree,

But thinks his neighbour further gone than he:  
E'en those who dwell beneath its very zone,  
Or never feel the rage, or never own;  
What happier natures shrink at with affright,  
The hard inhabitant contends is right.

230

Virtuous and vicious every man must be,  
Few in the extreme, but all in the degree;  
The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise;  
And e'en the best, by fits, what they despise.  
'T is but by parts we follow good or ill;  
For, vice or virtue, self directs it still;  
Each individual seeks a several goal;



But Heaven's great view, is one, and that the whole.  
 That counterworks each folly and caprice;  
 That disappoints the effect of every vice; 240  
 That, happy frailties to all ranks applied,  
 Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride;  
 Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief;  
 To kings presumption, and to crowds belief:  
 That, virtue's ends from vanity can raise,  
 Which seeks no interest, no reward but praise;  
 And build on wants, and on defects of mind,  
 The joy, the peace, the glory of mankind.

Heaven forming each on other to depend,  
 A master, or a servant, or a friend, 250  
 Bids each on other for assistance call,  
 Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all.  
 Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally  
 The common interest, or endear the tie.  
 To these we owe true friendship, love sincere,  
 Each home-felt joy that life inherits here;  
 Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,  
 Those joys, those loves, those interests, to resign;  
 Taught half by reason, half by mere decay,  
 To welcome death, and calmly pass away. 260

Whate'er the passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,  
 Not one will change his neighbour with himself.  
 The learn'd is happy nature to explore,  
 The fool is happy that he knows no more;  
 The rich is happy in the plenty given,  
 The poor contents him with the care of Heaven.  
 See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,  
 The sot a hero, lunatic a king;  
 The starving chemist in his golden views  
 Supremely bless'd, the poet in his muse. 270

See some strange comfort every state attend,  
 And pride bestow'd on all, a common friend.  
 See some fit passion every age supply;  
 Hope travels through, nor quits us when we die.



X Behold the child, by nature's kindly law,  
Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw:  
Some livelier play-thing gives his youth delight,  
A little louder, but as empty quite:  
Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,  
And beads and prayer-books are the toys of age: 280  
Pleased with this bauble still, as that before;  
'Till tired he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.

Meanwhile opinion gilds with varying rays  
Those painted clouds that beautify our days:  
Each want of happiness by hope supplied,  
And each vacuity of sense by pride:  
These build as fast as knowledge can destroy;  
In folly's cup still laughs the bubble joy;  
One prospect lost, another still we gain;  
And not a vanity is given in vain; 290  
E'en mean self-love becomes, by force divine,  
The scale to measure others' wants by thine.  
See! and confess, one comfort still must rise;  
'T is this, Though man's a fool, yet GOD IS WISE.

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ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE III.

*Of the Nature and State of Man with respect to Society.*

- I. The whole universe one system of society, ver. 7, &c. Nothing made wholly for itself, nor yet wholly for another, ver. 27. The happiness of animals mutual, ver. 49. II. Reason or instinct operate alike to the good of each individual, ver. 79. Reason or instinct operate also to society in all animals, ver. 109. III. How far society carried by instinct, ver. 115. How much farther by reason, ver. 128. IV. Of that which is called the state of nature, ver. 144. Reason instructed by instinct in the invention of arts, ver. 166, and in the forms of society, ver. 176. V. Origin of political societies, ver. 196. Origin of monarchy, ver. 207. Patriarchal government, ver. 212. VI. Origin of true religion and government, from the same principle of love, ver. 231, &c. Origin of superstition and tyranny, from the same principle of fear, ver. 237, &c. The influence of self-love operating to the social and public good, ver. 266. Restoration of true religion and government, on their first principle, ver. 285. Mixed government, ver. 288. Various forms of each, and the true end of all, ver. 300, &c.

EPISTLE III.

HERE then we rest; "The Universal cause  
Acts to one end, but acts by various laws."  
In all the madness of superfluous health,  
The train of pride, the impudence of wealth,  
Let this great truth be present night and day;  
But most be present, if we preach or pray.

I. Look round our world; behold the chain of love  
Combining all below and all above.  
See plastic Nature working to this end,  
The single atoms each to other tend,  
Attract, attracted to, the next in place  
Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.  
See matter next, with various life endued,  
Press to one centre still, the general good.  
See dying vegetables life sustain,  
See life dissolving vegetate again:



All forms that perish other forms supply  
 (By turns we catch the vital breath, and die),  
 Like bubbles on the sea of matter borne,  
 They rise, they break, and to that sea return. 20  
 Nothing is foreign; parts relate to whole;  
 One all-extending, all-preserving soul  
 Connects each being, greatest with the least;  
 Made beasts in aid of man, and man of beast;  
 All served, all serving: nothing stands alone;  
 The chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.

Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good,  
 Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?  
 Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,  
 For him as kindly spread the flowery lawn, 30  
 Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?  
 Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.  
 Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?  
 Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.  
 The bounding steed you pompously bestride,  
 Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.  
 Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain?  
 The birds of heaven shall vindicate their grain.  
 Thine the full harvest of the golden year?  
 Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer: 40  
 The hog, that ploughs not, nor obeys thy call,  
 Lives on the labours of this lord of all.

Know, Nature's children all divide her care;  
 The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear,  
 While man exclaims, "See all things for my use!"  
 "See man for mine!" replies a pamper'd goose:  
 And just as short of reason he must fall,  
 Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

Grant that the powerful still the weak control:  
 Be man the wit and tyrant of the whole: 50  
 Nature that tyrant checks; he only knows,  
 And helps, another creature's wants and woes.  
 Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,



Smit with her varying plumage, spare the dove?  
 Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings?  
 Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings?  
 Man cares for all: to birds he gives his woods,  
 To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods:  
 For some his interest prompts him to provide,  
 For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride: 60  
 All feed on one vain patron, and enjoy  
 The extensive blessing of his luxury.  
 That very life his learned hunger craves,  
 He saves from famine, from the savage saves;  
 Nay; feasts the animal he dooms his feast,  
 And, till he ends the being, makes it bless'd:  
 Which sees no more the stroke, or feels the pain,  
 Than favour'd man by touch ethereal slain.  
 The creature had his feast of life before;  
 Thou too must perish, when thy feast is o'er! 70  
 To each unthinking being, Heaven, a friend,  
 Gives not the useless knowledge of its end:  
 To man imparts it; but with such a view  
 As, while he dreads it, makes him hope it too:  
 The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear,  
 Death still draws nearer, never seeming near.  
 Great standing miracle! that Heaven assign'd  
 Its only thinking thing this turn of mind.

II. Whether with reason or with instinct bless'd, 79  
 Know, all enjoy that power which suits them best;  
 To bliss alike by that direction tend,  
 And find the means proportion'd to their end.  
 Say, where full instinct is the unerring guide,  
 What pope or council can they need beside?  
 Reason, however able, cool at best,  
 Cares not for service, or but serves when press'd,  
 Stays till we call, and then not often near;  
 But honest instinct comes a volunteer,  
 Sure never to o'ershoot, but just to hit;  
 While still too wide or short is human wit; 90



Sure by quick nature happiness to gain,  
 Which heavier reason labours at in vain.  
 This too serves always, reason never long:  
 One must go right, the other may go wrong.  
 See then the acting and comparing powers,  
 One in their nature, which are two in ours!  
 And reason raise o'er instinct as you can,  
 In this 't is God directs, in that 't is man.

Who taught the nations of the field and wood  
 To shun their poison, and to choose their food? 100  
 Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,  
 Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?  
 Who made the spider parallels design,  
 Sure as De Moivre, without rule or line?  
 Who bid the stork, Columbus-like, explore  
 Heavens not his own, and worlds unknown before;  
 Who calls the council, states the certain day;  
 Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way?

III. God, in the nature of each being, founds  
 Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds: 110  
 But as he framed a whole the whole to bless,  
 On mutual wants built mutual happiness;  
 So from the first eternal order ran,  
 And creature link'd to creature, man to man.  
 Whate'er of life all-quickenning ether keeps,  
 Or breathes through air, or shoots beneath the deeps,  
 Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds  
 The vital flame, and swells the genial seeds.  
 Not man alone, but all that roam the wood,  
 Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood, 120  
 Each loves itself, but not itself alone,  
 Each sex desires alike, till two are one.  
 Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace;  
 They love themselves, a third time, in their race.  
 Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,  
 The mothers nurse it, and the sires defend;  
 The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,



There stops the instinct, and there ends the care;  
The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,  
Another love succeeds, another race. 130

A longer care man's helpless kind demands;  
That longer care contracts more lasting bands;  
Reflection, reason, still the ties improve,  
At once extend the interest, and the love:  
With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn;  
Each virtue in each passion takes its turn;  
And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,  
That graft benevolence on charities.  
Still as one brood, and as another rose,  
These natural love maintain'd, habitual those. 140

The last, scarce ripen'd into perfect man,  
Saw helpless him from whom their life began:  
Memory and forecast just returns engage,  
That pointed back to youth, this on to age;  
While pleasure, gratitude, and hope combined,  
Still spread the interest, and preserve the kind.

IV. Nor think, in nature's state they blindly trod;  
The state of nature was the reign of God:  
Self-love and social at her birth began,  
Union the bond of all things, and of man. 150

Pride then was not; nor arts, that pride to aid;  
Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;  
The same his table, and the same his bed;  
No murder clothed him, and no murder fed.  
In the same temple, the resounding wood,  
All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God:  
The shrine with gore unstain'd, with gold undress'd,  
Unbribed, unbloody, stood the blameless priest:

Heaven's attribute was universal care,  
And man's prerogative, to rule, but spare. 160  
Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!  
Of half that live the butcher and the tomb;  
Who, foe to nature, hears the general groan,  
Murders their species, and betrays his own.



But just disease to luxury succeeds,  
 And every death its own avenger breeds;  
 The fury-passions from that blood began,  
 And turn'd on man a fiercer savage, man.

See him from nature rising slow to art!  
 To copy instinct then was reason's part: 170  
 Thus then to man the voice of nature spake —  
 "Go, from the creatures thy instructions take:  
 Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield;  
 Learn from the beasts the physic of the field;  
 Thy arts of building from the bee receive;  
 Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to weave;  
 Learn of the little Nautilus to sail,  
 Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.  
 Here too all forms of social union find,  
 And hence let reason, late, instruct mankind: 180  
 Here subterranean works and cities see;  
 There towns aërial on the waving tree.  
 Learn each small people's genius, policies,  
 The ant's republic, and the realm of bees;  
 How those in common all their wealth bestow,  
 And anarchy without confusion know;  
 And these for ever, though a monarch reign,  
 Their separate cell and properties maintain,  
 Mark what unvaried laws preserve each state,  
 Laws wise as nature, and as fix'd as fate. 190  
 In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw,  
 Entangle justice in her net of law,  
 And right, too rigid, harden into wrong;  
 Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.  
 Yet go! and thus o'er all the creatures sway,  
 Thus let the wiser make the rest obey:  
 And for those arts mere instinct could afford,  
 Be crown'd as monarchs, or as gods adored."

V. Great nature spoke; observant man obey'd;  
 Cities were built, societies were made: 200  
 Here rose one little state; another near



Grew by like means, and join'd through love or fear.  
 Did here the trees with ruddier burthens bend,  
 And there the streams in purer rills descend?

What war could ravish, commerce could bestow;  
 And he return'd a friend, who came a foe.

Converse and love mankind might strongly draw,  
 When love was liberty, and nature law.

Thus states were form'd; the name of king unknown,  
 Till common interest placed the sway in one.

210

'T was virtue only (or in arts or arms,  
 Diffusing blessings, or averting harms),  
 The same which in a sire the sons obey'd,  
 A prince the father of a people made.

VI. Till then, by nature crown'd, each patriarch sate,  
 King, priest, and parent, of his growing state:  
 On him, their second Providence, they hung,  
 Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.

He from the wondering furrow call'd the food,  
 Taught to command the fire, control the flood,  
 Draw forth the monsters of the abyss profound,  
 Or fetch the aërial eagle to the ground.

220

Till drooping, sickening, dying, they began  
 Whom they revered as god to mourn as man:  
 Then, looking up from sire to sire, explored  
 One great First Father, and that first adored.

Or plain tradition, that this all begun,  
 Convey'd unbroken faith from sire to son;  
 The worker from the work distinct was known,  
 And simple reason never sought but one:

230

Ere wit oblique had broke that steady light,  
 Man, like his Maker, saw that all was right;  
 To virtue, in the paths of pleasure trod,  
 And own'd a father when he own'd a God.  
 Love all the faith, and all the allegiance then,  
 For nature knew no right divine in men;  
 No ill could fear in God, and understood  
 A sovereign being, but a sovereign good.



True faith, true policy, united ran;  
That was but love of God, and this of man. 240

Who first taught souls enslaved, and realms undone,  
The enormous faith of many made for one;  
That proud exception to all nature's laws,  
To invert the world, and counterwork its cause?  
Force first made conquest, and that conquest, law;  
'Till superstition taught the tyrant awe,  
Then shared the tyranny, then lent it aid,  
And gods of conquerors, slaves of subjects made:  
She 'midst the lightning's blaze, and thunder's sound,  
When rock'd the mountains, and when groan'd the ground, 250  
She taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray,  
To power unseen, and mightier far than they:  
She, from the rending earth, and bursting skies,  
Saw gods descend, and fiends infernal rise:  
Here fix'd the dreadful, there the bless'd abodes,  
Fear made her devils, and weak hope her gods;  
Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,  
Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust;  
Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,  
And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe. 260  
Zeal then, not charity, became the guide;  
And hell was built on spite, and heaven on pride.  
Then sacred seemed the ethereal vault no more;  
Altars grew marble then, and reck'd with gore:  
Then first the flamen tasted living food,  
Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood;  
With Heaven's own thunders shook the world below,  
And play'd the god an engine on his foe.

So drives self-love, through just, and through unjust,  
To one man's power, ambition, lucre, lust: 270  
The same self-love in all becomes the cause  
Of what restrains him, government and laws.  
For, what one likes, if others like as well,  
What serves one will, when many wills rebel?



How shall he keep what, sleeping or awake,  
A weaker may surprise, a stronger take?  
His safety must his liberty restrain:

All join to guard what each desires to gain.

Forced into virtue thus, by self-defence,

E'en kings learn'd justice and benevolence:

280

Self-love forsook the path it first pursued,

And found the private in the public good.

'T was then the studious head or generous mind,

Follower of God, or friend of human-kind,

Poet or patriot, rose but to restore

The faith and moral, nature gave before;

Relumed her ancient light, not kindled new;

If not God's image, yet his shadow drew:

Taught power's due use to people and to kings,

Taught nor to slack, nor strain its tender strings,

290

The less or greater set so justly, true,

That touching one must strike the other too;

Till jarring interests of themselves create

The according music of a well-mix'd state.

Such is the world's great harmony, that springs

From order, union, full consent of things:

Where small and great, where weak and mighty, made

To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade;

More powerful each as needful to the rest,

And, in proportion as it blesses, bless'd;

300

Draw to one point, and to one centre bring

Beast, man, or angel, servant, lord, or king.

For forms of government let fools contest;

Whate'er is best administer'd is best:

For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;

His can't be wrong whose life is in the right;

In faith and hope the world will disagree,

But all mankind's concern is charity:

All must be false, that thwarts this one great end;

And all of God, that bless mankind, or mend.

310



Man, like the generous vine, supported lives:  
The strength he gains is from the embrace he gives.  
On their own axis as the planets run,  
Yet make at once their circle round the sun;  
So two consistent motions act the soul;  
And one regards itself, and one the whole.

Thus God and Nature link'd the general frame,  
And bade self-love and social be the same.

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## ARGUMENT OF EPISTLE IV.

*Of the Nature and State of Man with respect to Happiness.*

I. False notions of happiness, philosophical and popular, answered from ver. 19 to 77. II. It is the end of all men, and attainable by all, ver. 30. God intends happiness to be equal; and, to be so, it must be social, since all particular happiness depends on general, and since he governs by general, not particular laws, ver. 37. As it is necessary for order, and the peace and welfare of society, that external goods should be unequal, happiness is not made to consist in these, ver. 51. But, notwithstanding that inequality, the balance of happiness among mankind is kept even by Providence, by the two passions of hope and fear, ver. 70. III. What the happiness of individuals is, as far as is consistent with the constitution of this world; and that the good man has here the advantage, ver. 77. The error of imputing to virtue what are only the calamities of nature, or of fortune, ver. 94. IV. The folly of expecting that God should alter his general laws in favour of particulars, ver. 121. V. That we are not judges who are good; but that, whoever they are, they must be happiest, ver. 133, &c. VI. That external goods are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of, virtue, ver. 167. That even these can make no man happy without virtue: instanced in riches, ver. 185. Honours, ver. 193. Nobility, ver. 205. Greatness, ver. 217. Fame, ver. 237. Superior talents, ver. 257, &c. With pictures of human infelicity in men, possessed of them all, ver. 269, &c. VII. That virtue only constitutes a happiness, whose object is universal, and whose prospect eternal, ver. 307. That the perfection of virtue and happiness consists in a conformity to the order of Providence here, and a resignation to it here and hereafter, ver. 326, &c.

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## EPISTLE IV.

OH Happiness! our being's end and aim!  
 Good, pleasure, ease, content! whate'er thy name:  
 That something still which prompts the eternal sigh,  
 For which we bear to live, or dare to die;  
 Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,  
 O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool and wise:  
 Plant of celestial seed! if dropp'd below,  
 Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?



Fair opening to some court's propitious shine,  
 Or deep with diamonds in the flaming mine? 10  
 Twined with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,  
 Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?  
 Where grows? where grows it not? If vain our toil,  
 We ought to blame the culture, not the soil:  
 Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere,  
 'T is no where to be found, or every where:  
 'T is never to be bought, but always free,  
 And fled from monarchs, St. John! dwells with thee.

I. Ask of the learn'd the way? The learn'd are blind:  
 This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind; 20  
 Some place the bliss in action, some in ease,  
 Those call it pleasure, and contentment these:  
 Some, sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in pain;  
 Some, swell'd to gods, confess e'en virtue vain;  
 Or, indolent, to each extreme they fall,  
 To trust in every thing, or doubt of all.

Who thus define it, say they more or less  
 Than this, that happiness is happiness?

II. Take nature's path, and mad opinions leave;  
 All states can reach it, and all heads conceive; 30  
 Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;  
 There needs but thinking right, and meaning well;  
 And, mourn our various portions as we please,  
 Equal is common sense, and common ease.

Remember, man, "the Universal Cause  
 Acts not by partial, but by general laws;"  
 And makes what happiness we justly call,  
 Subsist not in the good of one, but all.  
 There 's not a blessing individuals find,  
 But some-way leans and hearkens to the kind: 40  
 No bandit fierce, no tyrant mad with pride,  
 No cavern'd hermit, rests self-satisfied:  
 Who most to shun or hate mankind pretend,  
 Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend:  
 Abstract what others feel, what others think,



All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink:  
Each has his share; and who would more obtain,  
Shall find the pleasure pays not half the pain.

Order is Heaven's first law; and this confess'd,  
Some are, and must be, greater than the rest; 50  
More rich, more wise; but who infers from hence  
That such are happier, shocks all common sense.  
Heaven to mankind impartial we confess,  
If all are equal in their happiness:

But mutual wants this happiness increase;  
All nature's difference keeps all nature's peace.  
Condition, circumstance, is not the thing;  
Bliss is the same in subject or in king,  
In who obtain defence, or who defend, 60  
In him who is, or him who finds a friend:

Heaven breathes through every member of the whole  
One common blessing, as one common soul.  
But fortune's gifts, if each alike possess'd,  
And each were equal, must not all contest?  
If then to all men happiness was meant,  
God in externals could not place content.

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,  
And these be happy call'd, unhappy those;  
But Heaven's just balance equal will appear,  
While those are placed in hope, and these in fear: 70  
Not present good or ill, the joy or curse,  
But future views of better or of worse.

O, sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,  
By mountains piled on mountains, to the skies?  
Heaven still with laughter the vain toil surveys,  
And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

III. Know, all the good that individuals find,  
Or God and nature meant to mere mankind,  
Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,  
Lie in three words, health, peace, and competence.  
But health consists with temperance alone; 81  
And peace, O virtue! peace is all thy own.



The good or bad the gifts of fortune gain;  
 But these less taste them, as they worse obtain.  
 Say, in pursuit of profit or delight,  
 Who risk the most, that take wrong means, or right?  
 Of vice or virtue, whether bless'd or cursed,  
 Which meets contempt, or which compassion first?  
 Count all the advantage prosperous vice attains,  
 'T is but what virtue flies from and disdains:  
 And grant the bad what happiness they would,  
 One they must want, which is, to pass for good.

90

Oh blind to truth, and God's whole scheme below,  
 Who fancy bliss to vice, to virtue woe!  
 Who sees and follows that great scheme the best,  
 Best knows the blessing, and will most be bless'd.  
 But fools the good alone unhappy call,  
 For ills or accidents that chance to all.

See Falkland dies, the virtuous and the just!

See godlike Turenne prostrate on the dust!

100

See Sidney bleeds amid the martial strife!

Was this their virtue, or contempt of life?

Say, was it virtue, more though Heaven ne'er gave,  
 Lamented Digby! sunk thee to the grave?

Tell me, if virtue made the son expire,

Why, full of days and honour, lives the sire?

Why drew Marseilles' good bishop purer breath,

When nature sicken'd, and each gale was death?

Or why so long (in life if long can be)

Lent Heaven a parent to the poor and me?

110

What makes all physical or moral ill?

There deviates nature, and here wanders will.

God sends not ill, if rightly understood,

Or partial ill is universal good,

Or change admits, or nature lets it fall,

Short, and but rare, till man improved it all.

We just as wisely might of Heaven complain

That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain,

As that the virtuous son is ill at ease



When his lewd father gave the dire disease. 120  
 Think we, like some weak prince, the Eternal Cause  
 Prone for his favourites to reverse his laws?

IV. Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,  
 Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?  
 On air or sea new motions be impress'd,  
 Oh blameless Bethel! to relieve thy breast?  
 When the loose mountain trembles from on high,  
 Shall gravitation cease, if you go by?  
 Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,  
 For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall? 130

V. But still this world (so fitted for the knave)  
 Contents us not. A better shall we have?  
 A kingdom of the just then let it be:  
 But first consider how those just agree.  
 The good must merit God's peculiar care!  
 But who, but God, can tell us who they are?  
 One thinks on Calvin Heaven's own spirit fell;  
 Another deems him instrument of hell;  
 If Calvin feel Heaven's blessing, or its rod,  
 This cries, there is, and that, there is no God. 140  
 What shocks one part will edify the rest,  
 Nor with one system can they all be bless'd.  
 The very best will variously incline,  
 And what rewards your virtue, punish mine.  
 WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT. — This world, 't is true,  
 Was made for Cæsar — but for Titus too;  
 And which more bless'd? who chain'd his country, say,  
 Or he whose virtue sigh'd to lose a day?

VI. "But sometimes virtue starves, while vice is fed."  
 What then? Is the reward of virtue bread? 150  
 That, vice may merit, 't is the price of toil;  
 The knave deserves it, when he tills the soil;  
 The knave deserves it, when he tempts the main,  
 Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.  
 The good man may be weak, be indolent;  
 Nor is his claim to plenty, but content.



But grant him riches, your demand is o'er;  
 "No — shall the good want health, the good want power?"  
 Add health and power, and every earthly thing,  
 "Why bounded power? why private? why no king?  
 Nay, why external for internal given? 161  
 Why is not man a god, and earth a heaven?"  
 Who ask and reason thus, will scarce conceive  
 God gives enough, while he has more to give;  
 Immense the power, immense were the demand;  
 Say, at what part of nature will they stand?  
 What nothing earthly gives or can destroy,  
 The soul's calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt joy,  
 Is virtue's prize: a better would you fix?  
 Then give humility a coach and six, 170  
 Justice a conqueror's sword, or truth a gown,  
 Or public spirit its great cure, a crown.  
 Weak, foolish man! will Heaven reward us there  
 With the same trash mad mortals wish for here?  
 The boy and man an individual makes,  
 Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes?  
 Go, like the Indian, in another life  
 Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife;  
 As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,  
 As toys and empires, for a god-like mind. 180  
 Rewards, that either would to virtue bring  
 No joy, or be destructive of the thing;  
 How oft by these at sixty are undone  
 The virtues of a saint at twenty-one!  
 To whom can riches give repute or trust,  
 Content or pleasure, but the good and just?  
 Judges and senates have been bought for gold;  
 Esteem and love were never to be sold.  
 Oh fool! to think God hates the worthy mind,  
 The lover and the love of human-kind, 190  
 Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,  
 Because he wants a thousand pounds a-year.  
 Honour and shame from no condition rise;



Act well your part, there all the honour lies.  
 Fortune in men has some small difference made,  
 One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;  
 The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,  
 The friar hooded, and the monarch crown'd.  
 "What differ more," you cry, "than crown and cowl?"  
 I'll tell you, friend! a wise man and a fool. 200  
 You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,  
 Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,  
 Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow:  
 The rest is all but leather or prunello.

Stuck o'er with titles and hung round with strings,  
 That thou mayst be by kings, or whores of kings.  
 Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,  
 In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece:  
 But by your fathers' worth if yours you rate,  
 Count me those only who were good and great. 210  
 Go! if your ancient, but ignoble blood  
 Has crept through scoundrels ever since the flood,  
 Go! and pretend your family is young;  
 Nor own your fathers have been fools so long.  
 What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards?  
 Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards.

Look next on greatness; say where greatness lies:  
 "Where, but among the heroes and the wise?"  
 Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,  
 From Macedonia's madman to the Swede; 220  
 The whole strange purpose of their lives, to find,  
 Or make, an enemy of all mankind!  
 Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,  
 Yet ne'er looks forward further than his nose.  
 No less alike the politic and wise:  
 All sly slow things, with circumspective eyes:  
 Men in their loose unguarded hours they take,  
 Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.  
 But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat;  
 'Tis phrase absurd to call a villain great: 230



Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,  
 Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.  
 Who noble ends by noble means obtains,  
 Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,  
 Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed  
 Like Socrates, that man is great indeed.

What's fame? a fancied life in others' breath,  
 A thing beyond us, e'en before our death.  
 Just what you hear you have; and what's unknown,  
 The same (my lord) if Tully's, or your own.

240

All that we feel of it begins and ends  
 In the small circle of our foes or friends;  
 To all beside as much an empty shade  
 As Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead;  
 Alike or when or where they shone or shine,  
 Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.

A wit's a feather, and a chief a rod;  
 An honest man's the noblest work of God.  
 Fame but from death a villain's name can save,  
 As justice tears his body from the grave;  
 When what to oblivion better were resign'd,  
 Is hung on high, to poison half mankind.

250

All fame is foreign but of true desert,  
 Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart:  
 One self-approving hour whole years outweighs  
 Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas;  
 And more true joy Marcellus exiled feels,  
 Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

In parts superior what advantage lies?  
 Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise?  
 'T is but to know how little can be known,  
 To see all others' faults, and feel our own;  
 Condemn'd in business or in arts to drudge,  
 Without a second, or without a judge:  
 Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land?  
 All fear, none aid you, and few understand.

260



Painful pre-eminence! yourself to view  
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

Bring then these blessings to a strict account;  
Make fair deductions; see to what they 'mount:  
How much of other each is sure to cost;  
How each for other oft is wholly lost;  
How inconsistent greater goods with these;  
How sometimes life is risk'd, and always ease:  
Think, and if still the things thy envy call,  
Say, wouldst thou be the man to whom they fall?  
To sigh for ribands if thou art so silly,  
Mark how they grace Lord Umbra, or Sir Billy.

271

Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life?

Look but on Gripus, or on Gripus' wife.

280

If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shined,

The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind:

Or ravish'd with the whistling of a name,

See Cromwell damn'd to everlasting fame!

If all, united, thy ambition call,

From ancient story, learn to scorn them all.

There, in the rich, the honour'd, famed, and great,

See the false scale of happiness complete!

In hearts of kings, or arms of queens who lay,

How happy! those to ruin, these betray.

290

Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,

From dirt and sea-weed as proud Venice rose;

In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,

And all that raised the hero sunk the man:

Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold,

But stain'd with blood, or ill exchanged for gold.

'Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,

Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.

O wealth ill-fated! which no act of fame

E'er taught to shine, or sanctified from shame!

300

What greater bliss attends their close of life?

Some greedy minion, or imperious wife,

The trophied arches, storied halls invade,



And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.  
 Alas! not dazzled with their noon-tide ray,  
 Compute the morn and evening to the day;  
 The whole amount of that enormous fame,  
 A tale that blends their glory with their shame!

Know then this truth (enough for man to know)  
 "Virtue alone is happiness below."

310

The only point where human bliss stands still,  
 And tastes the good without the fall to ill;  
 Where only merit constant pay receives,  
 Is bless'd in what it takes, and what it gives;  
 The joy unequall'd, if its end it gain,  
 And if it lose, attended with no pain:  
 Without satiety, though e'er so bless'd,  
 And but more relish'd as the more distress'd:  
 The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears,  
 Less pleasing far than virtue's very tears:  
 Good, from each object, from each place acquired,  
 For ever exercised, yet never tired;  
 Never elated, while one man's oppress'd;  
 Never dejected, while another's bless'd;  
 And where no wants, no wishes can remain,  
 Since but to wish more virtue, is to gain.

320

See the sole bliss Heaven could on all bestow!  
 Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know;  
 Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,  
 The bad must miss, the good untaught will find;  
 Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,  
 But looks through nature, up to nature's God;  
 Pursues that chain which links the immense design,  
 Joins heaven and earth, and mortal and divine;  
 Sees that no being any bliss can know,  
 But touches some above, and some below;  
 Learns from this union of the rising whole,  
 The first, last purpose of the human soul;  
 And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,  
 All end, in Love of God and Love of man.

331

340



For him alone, hope leads from goal to goal,  
 And opens still, and opens on his soul;  
 Till lengthen'd on to faith, and unconfined,  
 It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.  
 He sees why nature plants in man alone  
 Hope of known bliss, and faith in bliss unknown:  
 (Nature, whose dictates to no other kind  
 Are given in vain, but what they seek they find)  
 Wise is her present; she connects in this  
 His greatest virtue with his greatest bliss;  
 At once his own bright prospect to be bless'd;  
 And strongest motive to assist the rest.

350

Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,  
 Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.  
 Is this too little for the boundless heart?  
 Extend it, let thy enemies have part;  
 Grasp the whole world of reason, life, and sense,  
 In one close system of benevolence:  
 Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,  
 And height of bliss but height of charity.

360

God loves from whole to parts: but human soul  
 Must rise from individual to the whole.  
 Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,  
 As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;  
 The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,  
 Another still, and still another spreads;  
 Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;  
 His country next, and next all human race;  
 Wide and more wide, the o'erflowings of the mind  
 Take every creature in, of every kind;  
 Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty bless'd,  
 And Heaven beholds its image in his breast.

370

Come then, my friend! my genius! come along;  
 O master of the poet, and the song!  
 And while the muse now stoops, or now ascends,  
 To man's low passions, or their glorious ends,  
 Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,



To fall with dignity, with temper rise;  
Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer,  
From grave to gay, from lively to severe; 380  
Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,  
Intent to reason, or polite to please.  
O! while along the stream of time thy name  
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,  
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,  
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?  
When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,  
Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,  
Shall then this verse to future age pretend  
Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend? 390  
That, urged by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art  
From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;  
For wit's false mirror held up nature's light,  
Show'd erring pride, **WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT**;  
That reason, passion, answer one great aim;  
That true self-love and social are the same;  
That virtue only makes our bliss below;  
And all our knowledge is, ourselves to know.

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# THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

DEO OPT. MAX.

---

It may be proper to observe, that some passages in the preceding Essay, having been unjustly suspected of a tendency towards fate and naturalism, the author composed this prayer as the sum of all, to show that his system was founded in free-will, and terminated in piety: That the First Cause was as well the Lord and Governor of the universe as the Creator of it; and that, by submission to his will (the great principle enforced throughout the Essay) was not meant the suffering ourselves to be carried along by a blind determination, but the resting in a religious acquiescence, and confidence full of hope and immortality. To give all this the greater weight, the poet chose for his model the Lord's Prayer, which, of all others, best deserves the title prefixed to this paraphrase.

---

FATHER of all! in every age,  
In every clime adored,  
By saint, by savage, and by sage,  
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou Great First Cause, least understood;  
Who all my sense confined  
To know but this, That thou art good,  
And that myself am blind;

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,  
To see the good from ill;  
And, binding Nature fast in Fate,  
Left free the human will:



What conscience dictates to be done,  
Or warns me not to do,  
This, teach me more than hell to shun,  
That, more than heaven pursue.

What blessings thy free bounty gives,  
Let me not cast away;  
For God is paid when man receives;  
To enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span  
Thy goodness let me bound,  
Or think thee Lord alone of man,  
When thousand worlds are round:

Let not this weak, unknowing hand  
Presume thy bolts to throw,  
And deal damnation round the land,  
On each I judge thy foe.

If I am right, thy grace impart,  
Still in the right to stay:  
If I am wrong, O teach my heart  
To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish pride,  
Or impious discontent,  
At aught thy wisdom has denied,  
Or aught thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,  
To hide the fault I see;  
That mercy I to others show,  
That mercy show to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly so,  
Since quicken'd by thy breath;  
O lead me, wheresoe'er I go,  
Through this day's life or death.



This day, be bread and peace my lot:  
All else beneath the sun,  
'Thou know'st if best bestow'd or not,  
And let thy will be done.

To thee, whose temple is all space,  
Whose altar, earth, sea, skies!  
One chorus let all being raise!  
All Nature's incense rise!

---



# M O R A L   E S S A Y S,

## IN FOUR EPISTLES TO SEVERAL PERSONS

---

Est brevitæ opus, ut currat sententia, neu se  
Impediat verbis lassas onerantibus aures:  
Et sermone opus est modo tristi, sæpe jocoso,  
Defendente vicem modo rhetoris atque poëtæ,  
Interdum urbani, parcentis viribus, atque  
Extenuantis eas consultò.

HOR.

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### ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Essay on Man was intended to have been comprised in four books:

The first of which, the author has given us under that title, in four epistles.

The second was to have consisted of the same number:  
1. Of the extent and limits of human reason. 2. Of those arts and sciences, and of the parts of them, which are useful, and therefore attainable, together with those which are un-useful, and therefore unattainable. 3. Of the nature, ends, use, and application of the different capacities of men. 4. Of the use of learning, of the science of the world, and of wit; concluding with a satire against a misapplication of them, illustrated by pictures, characters, and examples.

The third book regarded civil regimen, or the science of politics, in which the several forms of a republic were to be examined and explained; together with the several modes of religious worship, as far forth as they affect society; between which the author always supposed there was the most interest-



ing relation and closest connexion; so that this part would have treated of civil and religious society in their full extent.

The fourth and last book concerned private ethics, or practical morality, considered in all the circumstances, orders, professions, and stations of human life.

The scheme of all this had been maturely digested, and communicated to Lord Bolingbroke, Dr. Swift, and one or two more, and was intended for the only work of his riper years; but was, partly through ill health, partly through discouragements from the depravity of the times, and partly on prudential and other considerations, interrupted, postponed, and, lastly, in a manner laid aside.

But as this was the author's favourite work, which more exactly reflected the image of his strong capacious mind, and as we can have but a very imperfect idea of it from the *disjecta membra poetæ* that now remain, it may not be amiss to be a little more particular concerning each of these projected books.

The first, as it treats of man in the abstract, and considers him in general under every of his relations, becomes the foundation, and furnishes out the subjects, of the three following; so that

The second book was to take up again the first and second epistles of the first book, and treat of man in his intellectual capacity at large, as has been explained above. Of this only a small part of the conclusion (which, as we said, was to have contained a satire against the misapplication of wit and learning) may be found in the fourth book of the *Dunciad*, and up and down, occasionally, in the other three.

The third book, in like manner, was to re-assume the subject of the third epistle of the first, which treats of man in his social, political, and religious capacity. But this part the poet afterwards conceived might be best executed in an epic poem; as the action would make it more animated, and the fable less invidious; in which all the great principles of true



and false governments and religions should be chiefly delivered in feigned examples.

The fourth and last book was to pursue the subject of the fourth epistle of the first, and to treat of ethics, or practical morality; and would have consisted of many members; of which the four following epistles were detached portions; the first two, on the characters of men and women, being the introductory part of this concluding book.

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# MORAL ESSAYS.

## EPISTLE I.

TO SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, L. COBHAM.

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### ARGUMENT.

*Of the Knowledge and Characters of Men.*

- I. That it is not sufficient for this knowledge to consider man in the abstract: books will not serve the purpose, nor yet our own experience singly, ver. 1. General maxims, unless they be formed upon both, will be but notional, ver. 10. Some peculiarity in every man, characteristic to himself, yet varying from himself, ver. 15. Difficulties arising from our own passions, fancies, faculties, &c. ver. 31. The shortness of life to observe in, and the uncertainty of the principles of action in men to observe by, ver. 37, &c. Our own principle of action often hid from ourselves, ver. 41. Some few characters plain, but in general confounded, dissembled, or inconsistent, ver. 51. The same man utterly different in different places and seasons, ver. 62. Unimaginable weaknesses in the greatest, ver. 70, &c. Nothing constant and certain but God and nature, ver. 95. No judging of the motives from the actions; the same actions proceeding from contrary motives, and the same motives influencing contrary actions; ver. 100.
- II. Yet, to form characters, we can only take the strongest actions of a man's life, and try to make them agree: The utter uncertainty of this, from nature itself, and from policy, ver. 120. Characters given according to the rank of men of the world, ver. 135. And some reason for it, ver. 140. Education alters the nature, or at least character, of many, ver. 149. Actions, passions, opinions, manners, humours, or principles, all subject to change. No judging by nature, from ver. 158 to ver. 168.
- III. It only remains to find (if we can) his ruling passion: That will certainly influence all the rest, and can reconcile the seeming or real inconsistency of all his actions, ver. 175. Instanced in the extraordinary character of Clodio, ver. 179. A caution against mistaking second qualities for first, which will destroy all possibility of the knowledge of mankind, ver. 210. Examples of the strength of the ruling passion, and its continuation to the last breath, ver. 222, &c.
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## EPISTLE I.

I. YES, you despise the man to books confined,  
 Who from his study rails at human-kind;  
 Though what he learns he speaks, and may advance  
 Some general maxims, or be right by chance.  
 The coxcomb bird, so talkative and grave,  
 That from his cage cries cuckold, whore, and knave,  
 Though many a passenger he rightly call,  
 You hold him no philosopher at all.

And yet the fate of all extremes is such,  
 Men may be read, as well as books, too much. 10  
 To observations which ourselves we make,  
 We grow more partial for the observer's sake;  
 To written wisdom, as another's, less;  
 Maxims are drawn from notions, these from guess.  
 There 's some peculiar in each leaf and grain,  
 Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein:  
 Shall only man be taken in the gross?  
 Grant but as many sorts of mind as moss.

That each from other differs, first confess;  
 Next, that he varies from himself no less; 20  
 Add nature's, custom's, reason's, passion's strife,  
 And all opinion's colours cast on life.

Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows finds,  
 Quick whirls, and shifting eddies, of our minds?  
 On human actions reason though you can,  
 It may be reason, but it is not man:  
 His principle of action once explore,  
 That instant 't is his principle no more.  
 Like following life through creatures you dissect,  
 You lose it in the moment you detect. 30

Yet more: the difference is as great between  
 The optics seeing, as the objects seen.  
 All manners take a tincture from our own;  
 Or some discolour'd through our passions shown.



Or fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies,  
Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.

Nor will life's stream for observation stay;  
It hurries all too fast to mark their way:  
In vain sedate reflections we would make,  
When half our knowledge we must snatch, not take.  
Oft, in the passion's wild rotation toss'd, 41  
Our spring of action to ourselves is lost:  
Tired, not determined, to the last we yield,  
And what comes then is master of the field.  
As the last image of that troubled heap,  
When sense subsides and fancy sports in sleep  
(Though past the recollection of the thought),  
Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought:  
Something as dim to our internal view,  
Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do. 50

True, some are open, and to all men known;  
Others, so very close, they're hid from none,  
(So darkness strikes the sense no less than light);  
Thus gracious Chandos is beloved at sight;  
And every child hates Shylock, though his soul  
Still sits at squat, and peeps not from its hole.  
At half mankind when generous Manly raves,  
All know 't is virtue, for he thinks them knaves:  
When universal homage Umbra pays,  
All see 't is vice, an itch of vulgar praise. 60  
When flattery glares, all hate it in a queen,  
While one there is who charms us with his spleen.

But these plain characters we rarely find;  
Though strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind:  
Or puzzling contraries confound the whole;  
Or affectations quite reverse the soul.  
The dull flat falsehood serves for policy;  
And in the cunning, truth itself's a lie:  
Unthought-of frailties cheat us in the wise;  
The fool lies hid in inconsistencies. 70

See the same man, in vigour, in the gout;



Alone, in company; in place, or out;  
 Early at business, and at hazard late;  
 Mad at a fox-chase, wise at a debate;  
 Drunk at a borough, civil at a ball;  
 Friendly at Hackney, faithless at Whitehall.

Catius is ever moral, ever grave,  
 Thinks who endures a knave, is next a knave,  
 Save just at dinner — then prefers, no doubt,  
 A rogue with venison to a saint without.

Who would not praise Patricio's high desert,  
 His hand unstain'd, his uncorrupted heart,  
 His comprehensive head, all interests weigh'd,  
 All Europe saved, yet Britain not betray'd?  
 He thanks you not, his pride is in piquet,  
 Newmarket-fame, and judgment at a bet.

80

What made (say, Montagne, or more sage Charron!)  
 Otho a warrior, Cromwell a buffoon?  
 A perjured prince a leaden saint revere,  
 A godless regent tremble at a star?  
 The throne a bigot keep, a genius quit,  
 Faithless through piety, and duped through wit?  
 Europe a woman, child, or dotard rule,  
 And just her wisest monarch made a fool?

90

Know, God and nature only are the same:  
 In man, the judgment shoots at flying game;  
 A bird of passage! gone as soon as found,  
 Now in the moon, perhaps now under ground.

II. In vain the sage, with retrospective eye,  
 Would from the apparent what conclude the why,  
 Infer the motive from the deed, and show,  
 That what we chanced, was what we meant to do.  
 Behold, if fortune or a mistress frowns,  
 Some plunge in business, others shave their crowns:  
 To ease the soul of one oppressive weight,  
 This quits an empire, that embroils a state:  
 The same adust complexion has impell'd  
 Charles to the convent, Philip to the field.

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Not always actions show the man: we find  
 Who does a kindness, is not therefore kind: 110  
 Perhaps prosperity becalm'd his breast,  
 Perhaps the wind just shifted from the east:  
 Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat,  
 Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the great:  
 Who combats bravely is not therefore brave,  
 He dreads a death-bed like the meanest slave:  
 Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise,  
 His pride in reasoning, not in acting, lies.

But grant that actions best discover man: 119  
 Take the most strong, and sort them as you can:  
 The few that glare, each character must mark,  
 You balance not the many in the dark.  
 What will you do with such as disagree?  
 Suppress them, or miscall them policy?  
 Must then at once (the character to save)  
 The plain rough hero turn a crafty knave?  
 Alas! in truth the man but changed his mind,  
 Perhaps was sick, in love, or had not dined.  
 Ask why from Britain Cæsar would retreat?  
 Cæsar himself might whisper, he was beat. 130  
 Why risk the world's great empire for a punk?  
 Cæsar perhaps might answer, he was drunk.  
 But, sage historians! 't is your task to prove  
 One action, conduct; one, heroic love.

'T is from high life high characters are drawn,  
 A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn;  
 A judge is just, a chancellor juster still;  
 A gownman learn'd, a bishop what you will;  
 Wise, if a minister; but, if a king,  
 More wise, more learn'd, more just, more every thing.  
 Court-virtues bear, like gems, the highest rate, 141  
 Born where Heaven's influence scarce can penetrate:  
 In life's low vale, the soil the virtues like,  
 They please as beauties, here as wonders strike.  
 Though the same sun with all-diffusive rays



Blush in the rose, and in the diamond blaze,  
 We prize the stronger effort of his power,  
 And justly set the gem above the flower.

'T is education forms the common mind;  
 Just as the twig is bent, the tree 's inclined. 150  
 Boastful and rough, your first son is a 'squire;  
 The next a tradesman, meek, and much a liar:  
 Tom struts a soldier, open, bold, and brave:  
 Will sneaks a scrivener, an exceeding knave.  
 Is he a churchman? then he 's fond of power:  
 A quaker? sly: a presbyterian? sour:  
 A smart free-thinker? all things in an hour.

Ask men's opinions: Scoto now shall tell  
 How trade increases, and the world goes well:  
 Strike off his pension, by the setting sun, 160  
 And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.

That gay free-thinker, a fine talker once,  
 What turns him now a stupid silent dunce?  
 Some god, or spirit, he has lately found;  
 Or chanced to meet a minister that frown'd.

Judge we by nature? habit can efface,  
 Interest o'ercome, or policy take place:  
 By actions? those uncertainty divides:  
 By passions? these dissimulation hides:  
 Opinions? they still take a wider range: 170  
 Find, if you can, in what you cannot change.

Manners with fortunes, humours turn with climes,  
 Tenets with books, and principles with times.

III. Search then the ruling passion: There, alone,  
 The wild are constant, and the cunning known;  
 The fool consistent, and the false sincere;  
 Priests, princes, women, no dissemblers here.  
 This clew once found unravels all the rest,  
 The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confess'd.  
 Wharton! the scorn and wonder of our days, 180  
 Whose ruling passion was the lust of praise;  
 Born with whate'er could win it from the wise,



Women and fools must like him, or he dies;  
 Though wondering senates hung on all he spoke,  
 The club must hail him master of the joke.  
 Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?  
 He 'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot too:  
 Then turns repentant, and his God adores  
 With the same spirit that he drinks and whores;  
 Enough if all around him but admire, 190  
 And now the punk applaud, and now the friar.  
 Thus with each gift of nature and of art,  
 And wanting nothing but an honest heart;  
 Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt,  
 And most contemptible, to shun contempt;  
 His passion still, to covet general praise;  
 His life, to forfeit it a thousand ways;  
 A constant bounty, which no friend has made;  
 An angel tongue, which no man can persuade;  
 A fool, with more of wit than half mankind, 200  
 Too rash for thought, for action too refined:  
 A tyrant to the wife his heart approves;  
 A rebel to the very king he loves;  
 He dies, sad outcast of each church and state,  
 And harder still! flagitious, yet not great.  
 Ask you why Wharton broke through every rule?  
 'T was all for fear the knaves should call him fool.

Nature well known, no prodigies remain,  
 Comets are regular, and Wharton plain.

Yet, in this search, the wisest may mistake, 210  
 If second qualities for first they take.  
 When Catiline by rapine swell'd his store;  
 When Cæsar made a noble dame a whore;  
 In this the lust, in that the avarice,  
 Were means, not ends; ambition was the vice.  
 That very Cæsar, born in Scipio's days,  
 Had aim'd, like him, by chastity, at praise.  
 Lucullus, when frugality could charm,  
 Had roasted turnips in the Sabine farm.



In vain the observer eyes the builder's toil, 220  
But quite mistakes the scaffold for the pile.

In this one passion man can strength enjoy,  
As fits give vigour just when they destroy.  
Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,  
Yet tames not this; it sticks to our last sand.  
Consistent in our follies and our sins,  
Here honest Nature ends as she begins.

Old politicians chew on wisdom past,  
And totter on in business to the last;  
As weak, as earnest; and as gravely out, 230  
As sober Lanesborow dancing in the gout.

Behold a reverend sire, whom want of grace  
Has made the father of a nameless race,  
Shoved from the wall perhaps, or rudely press'd  
By his own son, that passes by unblest'd:  
Still to his wench he crawls on knocking knees,  
And envies every sparrow that he sees.

As salmon's belly, Helluo, was thy fate;  
The doctor call'd, declares all help too late.  
"Mercy!" cries Helluo, "mercy on my soul! 240  
Is there no hope? — Alas! — then bring the jowl."

The frugal crone, whom praying priests attend,  
Still strives to save the hallow'd taper's end,  
Collects her breath, as ebbing life retires,  
For one puff more, and in that puff expires.

"Odious! in woollen! 't would a saint provoke,"  
Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke;  
"No, let a charming chintz and Brussels lace  
Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:  
One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead —  
And — Betty — give this cheek a little red." 251

The courtier smooth, who forty years had shined  
An humble servant to all human-kind,  
Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could stir,  
"If — where I'm going — I could serve you, Sir!"



"I give and I devise," old Euclio said,  
And sigh'd, "my lands and tenements to Ned."

"Your money, Sir?" — "My money, Sir, what all?  
"Why, — if I must" — then wept, "I give it Paul."  
"The manor, Sir?" — "The manor! hold," he cried.  
"Not that, — I cannot part with that," — and died.

And you! brave Cobham, to the latest breath,  
Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death:

Such in those moments as in all the past,

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"Oh, save my country, Heaven!" shall be your last.

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EPISTLE II.  
T O A L A D Y.

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ARGUMENT.

*Of the Characters of Women.*

That the particular characters of women are not so strongly marked as those of men, seldom so fixed, and still more inconsistent with themselves, ver. 1, &c. Instances of contrarieties given, even from such characters as are more strongly marked, and seemingly, therefore, most consistent: as, 1. In the affected. — 2. In the soft-natured. — 3. In the cunning and artful. — 4. In the whimsical. — 5. In the lewd and vicious. — 6. In the witty and refined. — 7. In the stupid and simple, ver. 21 to 207. The former part having shown that the particular characters of women are more various than those of men, it is nevertheless observed that the general characteristic of the sex, as to the ruling passion, is more uniform, ver. 207. This is occasioned partly by their nature, partly by their education, and in some degree by necessity, ver. 211. What are the aims and the fate of this sex: — 1. As to power. — 2. As to pleasure, ver. 219. — Advice for their true interest. — The picture of an estimable woman, with the best kind of contrarieties, ver. 249 to the end.

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There is nothing in Mr. Pope's works more highly finished than this epistle: yet its success was in no proportion to the pains he took in composing it. Something he chanced to drop in a short advertisement prefixed to it on its first publication, may, perhaps, account for the small attention given to it. He said that no one character in it was drawn from the life. The public believed him on his word, expressed little curiosity about a satire, in which there was nothing personal.

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NOTHING so true as what you once let fall,  
 "Most women have no characters at all."  
 Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,  
 And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair.



How many pictures of one nymph we view,  
 All how unlike each other, all how true!  
 Arcadia's countess, here, in ermined pride,  
 Is there, Pastora by a fountain side.  
 Here Fannia, leering on her own good man,  
 And there, a naked Leda with a swan. 10  
 Let then the fair-one beautifully cry,  
 In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye;  
 Or dress'd in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,  
 With simpering angels, palms, and harps divine;  
 Whether the charmer sinner it, or saint it,  
 If folly grow romantic, I must paint it.

Come then, the colours and the ground prepare!  
 Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air;  
 Choose a firm cloud, before it fall, and in it 19  
 Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.

Rufa, whose eye, quick glancing o'er the park,  
 Attracts each light gay meteor of a spark,  
 Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,  
 As Sappho's diamonds with her dirty smock;  
 Or Sappho at her toilet's greasy task,  
 With Sappho fragrant at an evening mask:  
 So morning insects, that in muck begun,  
 Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting sun.

How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;  
 The frail-one's advocate, the weak-one's friend. 30  
 To her, Calista proved her conduct nice;  
 And good Simplicius asks of her advice.  
 Sudden, she storms! she raves! You tip the wink,  
 But spare your censure; Silia does not drink.  
 All eyes may see from what the change arose,  
 All eyes may see — a pimple on her nose.

Papilia, wedded to her amorous spark,  
 Sighs for the shades — "How charming is a park!"  
 A park is purchased, but the fair he sees  
 All bathed in tears — "Oh odious, odious trees!" 40  
 Ladies, like variegated tulips, show,



'T is to their changes half their charms they owe;  
 Fine by defect, and delicately weak,  
 Their happy spots the nice admirer take.

'T was thus Calypso once each heart alarm'd,  
 Awed without virtue, without beauty charm'd;  
 Her tongue bewitch'd as oddly as her eyes;  
 Less wit than mimic, more a wit than wise:  
 Strange graces still, and stranger flights she had,  
 Was just not ugly, and was just not mad; 50  
 Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create,  
 As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.

Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,  
 To make a wash would hardly stew a child;  
 Has e'en been proved to grant a lover's prayer,  
 And paid a tradesman once to make him stare;  
 Gave alms at Easter in a Christian trim,  
 And made a widow happy for a whim.  
 Why then declare good-nature is her scorn,  
 When 't is by that alone she can be borne? 60  
 Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name?  
 A fool to pleasure, yet a slave to fame:  
 Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,  
 Now drinking citron with his grace and Chartres:  
 Now conscience chills her, and now passion burns;  
 And atheism and religion take their turns;  
 A very heathen in the carnal part,  
 Yet still a sad good Christian at her heart.

See sin in state, majestically drunk,  
 Proud as a peeress, prouder as a punk; 70  
 Chaste to her husband, frank to all beside,  
 A teeming mistress, but a barren bride.  
 What then? let blood and body bear the fault,  
 Her head's untouch'd, that noble seat of thought:  
 Such this day's doctrine — in another fit  
 She sins with poets through pure love of wit.  
 What has not fired her bosom or her brain?  
 Cæsar and Tall-boy, Charles and Charlemagne.



As Helluo, late dictator of the feast,  
 The nose of haut-gout, and the tip of taste, 80  
 Critiqued your wine, and analysed your meat,  
 Yet on plain pudding deign'd at home to eat:  
 So Philomédé, lecturing all mankind  
 On the soft passion, and the taste refined,  
 The address, the delicacy — stoops at once,  
 And makes her hearty meal upon a dunce.

Flavia's a wit, has too much sense to pray;  
 To toast our wants and wishes, is her way;  
 Nor asks of God, but of her stars, to give  
 The mighty blessing, "while we live, to live." 90  
 Then all for death, that opiate of the soul!  
 Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl.  
 Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?  
 A spark too fickle, or a spouse too kind.  
 Wise wretch! with pleasures too refined to please;  
 With too much spirit to be e'er at ease;  
 With too much quickness ever to be taught;  
 With too much thinking to have common thought:  
 You purchase pain with all that joy can give,  
 And die of nothing but a rage to live. 100

Turn then from wits, and look on Simo's mate;  
 No ass so meek, no ass so obstinate:  
 Or her that owns her faults but never mends,  
 Because she's honest, and the best of friends:  
 Or her whose life the church and scandal share,  
 For ever in a passion or a prayer:  
 Or her who laughs at hell, but (like her grace)  
 Cries, "Ah! how charming if there's no such place!"  
 Or who in sweet vicissitude appears  
 Of mirth and opium, ratafie and tears, 110  
 The daily anodyne, and nightly draught,  
 To kill those foes to fair-ones, time and thought.  
 Woman and fool are two hard things to hit:  
 For true no-meaning puzzles more than wit.

But what are those to great Atossa's mind?



Scarce once herself, by turns all womankind!  
 Who, with herself, or others, from her birth  
 Finds all her life one warfare upon earth:  
 Shines in exposing knaves and painting fools,  
 Yet is whate'er she hates and ridicules. 120  
 No thought advances, but her eddy brain  
 Whisks it about, and down it goes again.  
 Full sixty years the world has been her trade,  
 The wisest fool much time has ever made.  
 From loveless youth to unrespected age,  
 No passion gratified, except her rage:  
 So much the fury still outran the wit,  
 The pleasure miss'd her, and the scandal hit.  
 Who breaks with her, provokes revenge from hell,  
 But he 's a bolder man who dares be well. 130  
 Her every turn with violence pursued,  
 Nor more a storm her hate than gratitude:  
 To that each passion turns, or soon or late;  
 Love, if it makes her yield, must make her hate:  
 Superiors? death! and equals? what a curse!  
 But an inferior not dependent! worse.  
 Offend her, and she knows not to forgive;  
 Oblige her, and she 'll hate you while you live:  
 But die, and she 'll adore you — Then the bust  
 And temple rise — then fall again to dust. 140  
 Last night, her lord was all that 's good and great;  
 A knave this morning, and his will a cheat.  
 Strange! by the means defeated of the ends,  
 By spirit robb'd of power, by warmth of friends,  
 By wealth of followers! without one distress  
 Sick of herself, through very selfishness!  
 Atossa, cursed with every granted prayer,  
 Childless with all her children, wants an heir.  
 To heirs unknown descends the unguarded store,  
 Or wanders, Heaven-directed, to the poor. 150  
 Pictures, like these, dear Madam, to design,  
 Asks no firm hand, and no unerring line;



Some wandering touches, some reflected light,  
 Some flying stroke alone can hit them right:  
 For how should equal colours do the knack?  
 Chameleons who can paint in white and black?

“Yet Chloe sure was form’d without a spot.” —  
 Nature in her then err’d not, but forgot.

“With every pleasing, every prudent part, 159  
 Say, what can Chloe want?” — She wants a heart.  
 She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she ought;  
 But never, never reach’d one generous thought.  
 Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,  
 Content to dwell in decencies for ever.

So very reasonable, so unmoved,  
 As never yet to love, or to be loved.  
 She, while her lover pants upon her breast,  
 Can mark the figures on an Indian chest;  
 And when she sees her friend in deep despair,  
 Observes how much a chintz exceeds mohair. 170

Forbid it, Heaven, a favour or a debt  
 She e’er should cancel — but she may forget.  
 Safe is your secret still in Chloe’s ear;  
 But none of Chloe’s shall you ever hear.  
 Of all her dears she never slander’d one,  
 But cares not if a thousand are undone.  
 Would Chloe know if you ’re alive or dead?  
 She bids her footman put it in her head.  
 Chloe is prudent — Would you too be wise?  
 Then never break your heart when Chloe dies. 180

One certain portrait may (I grant) be seen,  
 Which Heaven has varnish’d out, and made a queen:  
 The same for ever! and described by all  
 With truth and goodness, as with crown and ball.  
 Poets heap virtues, painters gems at will.  
 And show their zeal, and hide their want of skill.  
 ’T is well — but, artists! who can paint or write,  
 To draw the naked is your true delight.  
 That robe of quality so struts and swells,



None see what parts of nature it conceals : 190  
 The exactest traits of body or of mind,  
 We owe to models of an humble kind.  
 If Queensberry to strip there's no compelling,  
 'T is from a handmaid we must take a Helen.  
 From peer or bishop 't is no easy thing  
 To draw the man who loves his god or king;  
 Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)  
 From honest Mahomet or plain parson Hale.

But grant, in public men sometimes are shown,  
 A woman's seen in private life alone: 200  
 Our bolder talents in full light display'd;  
 Your virtues open fairest in the shade.  
 Bred to disguise, in public 't is you hide;  
 There, none distinguish 'twixt your shade or pride,  
 Weakness or delicacy; all so nice,  
 That each may seem a virtue or a vice.

In men we various ruling passions find;  
 In women, two almost divide the kind:  
 Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,  
 The love of pleasure, and the love of sway. 210

That nature gives; and where the lesson taught  
 Is but to please, can pleasure seem a fault?  
 Experience, this; by man's oppression cursed,  
 They seek the second not to lose the first.

Men, some to business, some to pleasure take;  
 But every woman is at heart a rake:  
 Men, some to quiet, some to public strife;  
 But every lady would be queen for life.

Yet mark the fate of a whole sex of queens!  
 Power all their end, but beauty all the means: 220  
 In youth they conquer with so wild a rage,  
 As leaves them scarce a subject in their age:  
 For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam;  
 No thought of peace or happiness at home.  
 But wisdom's triumph is well timed retreat,  
 As hard a science to the fair as great!



Beauties, like tyrants, old and friendless grown,  
 Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone;  
 Worn out in public, weary every eye,  
 Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die. 230

Pleasures the sex, as children birds, pursue,  
 Still out of reach, yet never out of view;  
 Sure, if they catch, to spoil the toy at most,  
 To covet flying, and regret when lost:  
 At last, to follies youth could scarce defend,  
 It grows their age's prudence to pretend;  
 Ashamed to own they gave delight before,  
 Reduced to feign it, when they give no more:  
 As hags hold sabbaths less for joy than spite,  
 So these their merry, miserable night; 240  
 Still round and round the ghosts of beauty glide,  
 And haunt the places where their honour died.

See how the world its veterans rewards!  
 A youth of frolics, an old age of cards;  
 Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,  
 Young without lovers, old without a friend;  
 A fop their passion, but their prize a sot,  
 Alive ridiculous, and dead forgot!

Ah, friend! to dazzle let the vain design; 249  
 To raise the thought, and touch the heart, be thine!  
 That charm shall grow, while what fatigues the ring,  
 Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing:  
 So when the sun's broad beam has tired the sight,  
 All mild ascends the moon's more sober light,  
 Serene in virgin modesty she shines,  
 And unobserved the glaring orb declines.

O! bless'd with temper, whose unclouded ray  
 Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;  
 She who can love a sister's charms, or hear  
 Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear; 260  
 She who ne'er answers till a husband cools;  
 Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules;  
 Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,



Yet has her humour most when she obeys;  
Let fops or fortunes fly which way they will,  
Disdains all loss of tickets or codille;  
Spleen, vapours, or small-pox, above them all,  
And mistress of herself though china fall.

And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,  
Woman's at best a contradiction still. 270

Heaven when it strives to polish all it can  
Its last best work, but forms a softer man;  
Picks from each sex, to make the favourite bless'd,  
Your love of pleasure, our desire of rest;  
Blends, in exception to all general rules,  
Your taste of follies with our scorn of fools;  
Reserve with frankness, art with truth allied,  
Courage with softness, modesty with pride;  
Fix'd principles with fancy ever new;  
Shakes all together, and produces — you. 280

Be this a woman's fame; with this unbless'd,  
Toasts live a scorn, and queens may die a jest.  
This Phœbus promised (I forget the year)  
When those blue eyes first open'd on the sphere;  
Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care,  
Averted half your parents' simple prayer;  
And gave you beauty, but denied the pelf  
That buys your sex a tyrant o'er itself.  
The generous god, who wit and gold refines,  
And ripens spirits as he ripens mines, 290  
Kept dross for duchesses, the world shall know it,  
To you gave sense, good-humour, and a poet.

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EPISTLE III.  
TO ALLEN, LORD BATHURST.

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ARGUMENT.

*Of the Use of Riches.*

That it is known to few, most falling into one of the extremes, avarice or profusion, ver. 1, &c. The point discussed, whether the invention of money has been more commodious or pernicious to mankind, ver. 21 to 77. That riches, either to the avaricious or the prodigal, cannot afford happiness, scarcely necessities, ver. 89 to 160. That avarice is an absolute frenzy, without an end or purpose, ver. 113, &c. 152. Conjectures about the motives of avaricious men, ver. 121 to 153. That the conduct of men with respect to riches, can only be accounted for by the order of Providence, which works the general good out of extremes, and brings all to its great end by perpetual revolutions, ver. 161 to 178. How a miser acts upon principles which appear to him reasonable, ver. 179. How a prodigal does the same, ver. 199. The true medium, and true use of riches, ver. 219. The man of Ross, ver. 250. The fate of the profuse and the covetous, in two examples; both miserable in life and in death, ver. 300, &c. The story of Sir Balaam, ver. 339 to the end.

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This Epistle was written after a violent outcry against our author, on a supposition that he had ridiculed a worthy nobleman, merely for his wrong taste. He justified himself upon that article in a letter to the Earl of Burlington; at the end of which are these words: "I have learnt that there are some who would rather be wicked than ridiculous: and therefore it may be safer to attack vices than follies. I will therefore leave my betters in the quiet possession of their idols, their groves, and their high-places; and change my subject from their pride to their meanness, from their vanities to their miseries; and as the only certain way to avoid misconstructions, to lessen offence, and not to multiply ill-natured applications, I may probably in my next make use of real names instead of fictitious ones."

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P. WHO shall decide when doctors disagree,  
 And soundest casuists doubt, like you and me?  
 You hold the word, from Jove to Momus given,  
 That man was made the standing jest of Heaven:  
 And gold but sent to keep the fools in play,  
 For some to heap, and some to throw away.

But I, who think more highly of our kind  
 (And, surely, Heaven and I are of a mind),  
 Opine, that nature, as in duty bound,  
 Deep hid the shining mischief under ground:  
 But when, by man's audacious labour won,  
 Flamed forth this rival to its sire the sun,  
 Then careful Heaven supplied two sorts of men,  
 To squander these, and those to hide again.

10

Like doctors thus, when much dispute has pass'd,  
 We find our tenets just the same at last:  
 Both fairly owning riches, in effect,  
 No grace of Heaven, or token of the elect;  
 Given to the fool, the mad, the vain, the evil,  
 To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the devil.

20

B. What nature wants, commodious gold bestows:  
 'T is thus we eat the bread another sows.

P. But how unequal it bestows, observe;  
 'T is thus we riot, while, who sow it, starve:  
 What nature wants (a phrase I much distrust)  
 Extends to luxury, extends to lust:  
 Useful, I grant, it serves what life requires,  
 But, dreadful too, the dark assassin hires.

B. Trade it may help, society extend:

P. But lures the pirate, and corrupts the friend.

B. It raises armies in a nation's aid:

31

P. But bribes a senate, and the land's betray'd.  
 In vain may heroes fight and patriots rave,  
 If secret gold sap on from knave to knave.  
 Once, we confess, beneath the patriot's cloak,  
 From the crack'd bag the dropping guinea spoke,  
 And jingling down the back-stairs, told the crew,



"Old Cato is as great a rogue as you."

Bless'd paper credit! last and best supply!

That lends corruption lighter wings to fly!

40

Gold, imp'd by thee, can compass hardest things,

Can pocket states, can fetch or carry kings;

A single leaf shall waft an army o'er,

Or ship off senates to some distant shore;

A leaf, like Sibyl's, scatter to and fro

Our fates and fortunes, as the wind shall blow;

Pregnant with thousands flits the scrap unseen,

And silent sells a king or buys a queen.

Oh! that such bulky bribes as all might see,

Still, as of old, encumber'd villany!

50

Could France or Rome divert our brave designs,

With all their brandies or with all their wines?

What could they more than knights and 'squires confound,

Or water all the quorum ten miles round?

A statesman's slumbers how this speech would spoil!

"Sir, Spain has sent a thousand jars of oil;

Huge bales of British cloth blockade the door;

A hundred oxen at your levee roar."

Poor avarice one torment more would find;

Nor could profusion squander all in kind.

60

Astride his cheese Sir Morgan might we meet,

And Worldly crying coals from street to street,

Whom, with a wig so wild and mien so mazed,

Pity mistakes for some poor tradesman crazed,

Had Colepepper's whole wealth been hops and hogs,

Could he himself have sent it to the dogs?

His grace will game: to White's a bull be led,

With spurning heels and with a butting head:

To White's be carried, as to ancient games,

Fair coursers, vases, and alluring dames.

70

Shall then Uxorio, if the stakes he sweep,

Bear home six whores, and make his lady weep?

Or soft Adonis, so perfumed and fine,

Drive to St. James's a whole herd of swine?



O filthy check on all industrious skill,  
 To spoil the nation's last great trade, quadrille!  
 Since then, my lord, on such a world we fall,  
 What say you? B. Say? Why, take it, gold and all.

P. What riches give us, let us then inquire:  
 Meat, fire, and clothes. B. What more? P. Meat, clothes,  
 and fire. 80

Is this too little? would you more than live?  
 Alas! 't is more than Turner finds they give.  
 Alas! 't is more than (all his visions pass'd)  
 Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last!  
 What can they give? To dying Hopkins heirs?  
 To Chartres vigour? Japhet nose and ears?  
 Can they in gems bid pallid Hippia glow?  
 In Fulvia's buckle ease the throbs below?  
 Or heal, old Narses, thy obscener ail,  
 With all the embroidery plaster'd at thy tail? 90  
 They might (were Harpax not too wise to spend)  
 Give Harpax self the blessing of a friend;  
 Or find some doctor that would save the life  
 Of wretched Shylock, spite of Shylock's wife.  
 But thousands die, without or this or that,  
 Die, and endow a college or a cat.  
 To some, indeed, Heaven grants the happier fate,  
 To enrich a bastard, or a son they hate.

Perhaps you think the poor might have their part;  
 Bond damns the poor, and hates them from his heart; 100  
 The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a rule,  
 That every man in want is knave or fool:  
 "God cannot love," says Blunt, with tearless eyes,  
 "The wretch he starves" — and piously denies:  
 But the good bishop, with a meeker air,  
 Admits, and leaves them, Providence's care.

Yet, to be just to these poor men of pelf,  
 Each does but hate his neighbour as himself:  
 Damn'd to the mines, an equal fate betides  
 The slave that digs it, and the slave that hides. 110



B. Who suffer thus, mere charity should own,  
Must act on motives powerful, though unknown.

P. Some war, some plague, or famine, they foresee,  
Some revelation hid from you and me.

Why Shylock wants a meal, the cause is found;  
He thinks a loaf will rise to fifty pound.

What made directors cheat in South-sea year?  
To live on venison when it sold so dear.

Ask you why Phryne the whole auction buys?

Phryne foresees a general excise.

120

Why she and Sappho raise that monstrous sum?

Alas! they fear a man will cost a plum.

Wise Peter sees the world's respect for gold,

And therefore hopes this nation may be sold:

Glorious ambition! Peter, swell thy store,

And be what Rome's great Didius was before.

The crown of Poland, venal twice an age,

To just three millions stinted modest Gage.

But nobler scenes Maria's dreams unfold,

Hereditary realms, and worlds of gold.

130

Congenial souls; whose life one avarice joins,

And one fate buries in the Asturian mines.

Much-injured Blunt! why bears he Britain's hate?

A wizard told him in these words our fate:

"At length corruption, like a general flood

(So long by watchful ministers withstood),

Shall deluge all; and avarice creeping on,

Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the sun;

Statesman and patriot ply alike the stocks,

Peeress and butler share alike the box,

140

And judges job, and bishops bite the town,

And mighty dukes pack cards for half-a-crown.

See Britain sunk in lucre's sordid charms,

And France revenged of Anne's and Edward's arms!"

'T was no court-badge, great scrivener! fired thy brain,

Nor lordly luxury, nor city gain:

No, 't was thy righteous end, ashamed to see



Senates degenerate, patriots disagree,  
And nobly wishing party-rage to cease,  
To buy both sides, and give thy country peace. 150

“All this is madness,” cries a sober sage:  
“But who, my friend, has reason in his rage?  
The ruling passion, be it what it will,  
The ruling passion conquers reason still.”  
Less mad the wildest whimsey we can frame,  
Than ev’n that passion, if it has no aim;  
For though such motives folly you may call,  
The folly’s greater to have none at all.

Hear then the truth: “’T is Heaven each passion sends,  
And different men directs to different ends. 160  
Extremes in nature equal good produce,  
Extremes in man concur to general use.”

Ask we what makes one keep, and one bestow?  
That power who bids the ocean ebb and flow;  
Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain,  
Through reconciled extremes of drought and rain;  
Builds life on death, on change duration founds,  
And gives the eternal wheels to know their rounds.

Riches, like insects, when conceal’d they lie,  
Wait but for wings, and in their season fly. 170  
Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,  
Sees but a backward steward for the poor;  
This year a reservoir to keep and spare,  
The next a fountain, spouting through his heir,  
In lavish streams to quench a country’s thirst,  
And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst.

Old Cotta shamed his fortune and his birth,  
Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth:  
What though (the use of barbarous spits forgot)  
His kitchen vied in coolness with his grot? 180  
His court with nettles, moats with cresses stored,  
With soups unbought and salads bless’d his board?  
If Cotta lived on pulse, it was no more  
Than Bramins, saints, and sages did before:



To cram the rich was prodigal expense,  
 And who would take the poor from Providence?  
 Like some lone Chartreux stands the good old hall,  
 Silence without, and fasts within the wall;  
 No rafter'd roofs with dance and tabour sound,  
 No noontide bell invites the country round: 190  
 Tenants with sighs the smokeless towers survey,  
 And turn the unwilling steeds another way:  
 Benighted wanderers, the forest o'er,  
 Curse the saved candle and unopening door;  
 While the gaunt mastiff, growling at the gate,  
 Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.

Not so his son: he mark'd this oversight,  
 And then mistook reverse of wrong for right:  
 (For what to shun, will no great knowledge need;  
 But what to follow, is a task indeed). 200

Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,  
 More go to ruin fortunes, than to raise.  
 What slaughter'd hecatombs, what floods of wine,  
 Fill the capacious 'squire, and deep divine!  
 Yet no mean motive this profusion draws,  
 His oxen perish in his country's cause;  
 'T is George and Liberty that crowns the cup,  
 And zeal for that great house which eats him up.  
 The woods recede around the naked seat,  
 The Sylvans groan — no matter — for the fleet: 210  
 Next goes his wool — to clothe our valiant bands:  
 Last, for his country's love, he sells his lands.  
 To town he comes, completes the nation's hope,  
 And heads the bold train-bands, and burns a pope.  
 And shall not Britain now reward his toils,  
 Britain, that pays her patriots with her spoils?  
 In vain at court the bankrupt pleads his cause;  
 His thankless country leaves him to her laws.

The sense to value riches, with the art  
 To enjoy them, and the virtue to impart, 220  
 Not meanly, nor ambitiously pursued,



Not sunk by sloth, nor raised by servitude;  
 To balance fortune by a just expense,  
 Join with œconomy, magnificence;  
 With splendour charity, with plenty health;  
 O teach us, Bathurst! yet unspoil'd by wealth!  
 That secret rare, between the extremes to move  
 Of mad good-nature, and of mean self-love.

B. To worth or want well-weigh'd, be bounty given,  
 And ease or emulate the care of Heaven 230  
 (Whose measure full o'erflows on human race);  
 Mend fortune's fault, and justify her grace.  
 Wealth in the gross is death, but life diffused;  
 As poison heals in just proportion used:  
 In heaps, like ambergris, a stink it lies,  
 But well dispersed, is incense to the skies.

P. Who starves by nobles, or with nobles eats?  
 The wretch that trusts them, and the rogue that cheats.  
 Is there a lord, who knows a cheerful noon  
 Without a fiddler, flatterer, or buffoon? 240  
 Whose table, wit or modest merit share,  
 Un-elbow'd by a gamester, pimp, or player?  
 Who copies yours or Oxford's better part,  
 To ease the oppress'd and raise the sinking heart?  
 Where'er he shines, O Fortune, gild the scene,  
 And angels guard him in the golden mean!  
 There, English bounty yet awhile may stand,  
 And honour linger ere it leaves the land.

But all our praises why should lord engross?  
 Rise, honest muse! and sing the MAN OF ROSS: 250  
 Pleased Vaga echoes through her winding bounds,  
 And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds.  
 Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?  
 From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?  
 Not to the skies in useless columns toss'd,  
 Or in proud falls magnificently lost,  
 But clear and artless pouring through the plain  
 Health to the sick, and solace to the swain.



Whose causeway parts the vale with shady rows?  
 Whose seats the weary traveller repose? 260  
 Who taught that heaven-directed spire to rise?  
 "The Man of Ross," each lisping babe replies.  
 Behold the market-place with poor o'erspread!  
 The Man of Ross divides the weekly bread:  
 He feeds yon alms-house, neat, but void of state,  
 Where age and want sit smiling at the gate:  
 Him portion'd maids, apprenticed orphans bless'd,  
 The young who labour, and the old who rest.  
 Is any sick? the Man of Ross relieves, 269  
 Prescribes, attends, the medicine makes and gives.  
 Is there a variance? enter but his door,  
 Balk'd are the courts, and contest is no more.  
 Desparing quacks with curses fled the place,  
 And vile attorneys, now a useless race.

B. Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue  
 What all so wish, but want the power to do!  
 O say, what sums that generous hand supply;  
 What mines to swell that boundless charity?

P. Of debts and taxes, wife and children clear,  
 This man possess'd — five hundred pounds a year. 280  
 Blush, grandeur, blush! proud courts, withdraw your blaze,  
 Ye little stars! hide your diminish'd rays.

B. And what! no monument, inscription, stone?  
 His race, his form, his name almost unknown?

P. Who builds a church to God, and not to fame,  
 Will never mark the marble with his name:  
 Go, search it there, where to be born and die,  
 Of rich and poor makes all the history;  
 Enough that virtue fill'd the space between,  
 Proved by the ends of being to have been. 290  
 When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend  
 The wretch who living saved a candle's end;  
 Shouldering God's altar a vile image stands,  
 Belies his features, nay, extends his hands;  
 That live-long wig, which Gorgon's self might own,



Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone.  
Behold what blessings wealth to life can lend!  
And see, what comfort it affords our end.

In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,  
The floors of plaster, and the walls of dung, 300  
On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,  
With tape-tied curtains, never meant to draw,  
The George and Garter dangling from that bed  
Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,  
Great Villiers lies — alas! how changed from him,  
That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim!  
Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,  
The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love;  
Or just as gay at council, in a ring  
Of mimic statesmen, and their merry king 310  
No wit to flatter, left of all his store!  
No fool to laugh at, which he valued more.  
There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,  
And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends!

His grace's fate sage Cutler could foresee,  
And well (he thought) advised him, "Live like me!"  
As well his grace replied, "Like you, Sir John?  
That I can do when all I have is gone."  
Resolve me, reason, which of these is worse,  
Want with a full, or with an empty purse 320  
Thy life more wretched, Cutler, was confess'd,  
Arise, and tell me, was thy death more bless'd?  
Cutler saw tenants break, and houses fall;  
For very want he could not build a wall.  
His only daughter in a stranger's power;  
For very want he could not pay a dower.  
A few gray hairs his reverend temples crown'd;  
'T was very want that sold them for two pound.  
What! e'en denied a cordial at his end,  
Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend? 330  
What but a want, which you perhaps think mad,  
Yet numbers feel, the want of what he had!



Cutler and Brutus dying, both exclaim,  
"Virtue! and wealth! what are ye but a name!"

Say, for such worth are other worlds prepared?  
Or are they both, in this, their own reward  
A knotty point to which we now proceed.  
But you are tired — I'll tell a tale — B. Agreed.

P. Where London's column, pointing at the skies  
Like a tall bully, lifts the head and lies, 340  
There dwelt a citizen of sober fame,  
A plain good man, and Balaam was his name;  
Religious, punctual, frugal, and so forth;  
His word would pass for more than he was worth.  
One solid dish his week-day meal affords,  
An added pudding solemnized the Lord's:  
Constant at church and 'change; his gains were sure;  
His givings rare, save farthings to the poor.

The devil was piqued such saintship to behold,  
And long'd to tempt him, like good Job of old; 350  
But Satan now is wiser than of yore,  
And tempts by making rich, not making poor.

Roused by the prince of air, the whirlwinds sweep  
The surge, and plunge his father in the deep;  
Then full against his Cornish lands they roar,  
And two rich shipwrecks bless the lucky shore.

Sir Balaam now, he lives like other folks,  
He takes his chirping pint, and cracks his jokes:  
"Live like yourself," was soon my lady's word;  
And, lo! two puddings smoked upon the board. 360

Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,  
An honest factor stole a gem away:  
He pledged it to the knight; the knight had wit,  
So kept the diamond, and the rogue was bit.  
Some scruple rose, but thus he eased his thought,  
"I'll now give sixpence where I gave a groat;  
Where once I went to church, I'll now go twice —  
And am so clear too of all other vice."



The tempter saw his time: the work he plied;  
 Stocks and subscriptions pour on every side, 370  
 Till all the demon makes his full descent  
 In one abundant shower of cent per cent,  
 Sinks deep within him, and possesses whole,  
 Then dubs director, and secures his soul.

Behold Sir Balaam, now a man of spirit,  
 Ascribes his gettings to his parts and merit;  
 What late he call'd a blessing, now was wit,  
 And God's good providence, a lucky hit.  
 Things change their titles, as our manners turn:  
 His compting-house employ'd the Sunday morn: 380  
 Seldom at church ('t was such a busy life),  
 But duly sent his family and wife.  
 There (so the devil ordain'd) one Christmas-tide  
 My good old lady catch'd a cold, and died.

A nymph of quality admires our knight;  
 He marries, bows at court, and grows polite;  
 Leaves the dull cits, and joins (to please the fair)  
 The well-bred cuckolds in St. James's air:  
 First, for his son a gay commission buys,  
 Who drinks, whores, fights, and in a duel dies: 390  
 His daughter flaunts a viscount's tawdry wife;  
 She bears a coronet and p—x for life.  
 In Britain's senate he a seat obtains,  
 And one more pensioner St. Stephen gains.  
 My lady falls to play: so bad her chance,  
 He must repair it; takes a bribe from France;  
 The house impeach him, Coningsby harangues;  
 The court forsake him, and Sir Balaam hangs:  
 Wife, son, and daughter, Satan! are thy own;  
 His wealth, yet dearer, forfeit to the crown: 400  
 The devil and the king divide the prize,  
 And sad Sir Balaam curses God, and dies.

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EPISTLE IV.  
 TO RICHARD BOYLE,  
 EARL OF BURLINGTON.

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ARGUMENT.  
*Of the Use of Riches.*

The vanity of expense in people of wealth and quality. The abuse of the word Taste, ver. 13. That the first principle and foundation in this, as in every thing else, is good sense, ver. 40. The chief proof of it is to follow nature, even in works of mere luxury and elegance. Instanced in architecture and gardening, where all must be adapted to the genius and use of the place, and the beauties not forced into it, but resulting from it, ver. 50. How men are disappointed in their most expensive undertakings, for want of this true foundation, without which nothing can please long, if at all; and the best examples and rules will be but perverted into something burthensome and ridiculous, ver. 65 to 92. A description of the false taste of magnificence; the first grand error of which is, to imagine that greatness consists in the size and dimension, instead of the proportion and harmony of the whole, ver. 97, and the second either in joining together parts incoherent, or too minutely resembling, or in the repetition of the same too frequently, ver. 105, &c. A word or two of false taste in books, in music, in painting, even in preaching and prayer, and lastly in entertainments, ver. 133, &c. Yet Providence is justified in giving wealth to be squandered in this manner, since it is dispersed to the poor and laborious part of mankind, ver. 169. [recurring to what is laid down in the first book, Ep. ii. and in the Epistle preceding this, ver. 159, &c.] What are the proper objects of magnificence, and a proper field for the expense of great men, ver. 177, &c. And finally the great and public works which become a prince, ver. 191, to the end.

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The extremes of avarice and profusion being treated of in the foregoing Epistle; this takes up one particular branch of the latter, the vanity of expense in people of wealth and quality; and is therefore a corollary to the preceding, just as the Epistle on the Characters of Women is to that of the Knowledge and Characters of Men. It is equally remarkable for exactness of method with the rest. But the nature of the subject, which is less philosophical, makes it capable of being analysed in a much narrower compass.

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'T is strange, the miser should his cares employ  
 To gain those riches he can ne'er enjoy:  
 Is it less strange, the prodigal should waste  
 His wealth, to purchase what he ne'er can taste?  
 Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats;  
 Artists must choose his pictures, music, meats:  
 He buys for Topham drawings and designs;  
 For Pembroke statues, dirty gods, and coins;  
 Rare monkish manuscripts for Hearne alone,  
 And books for Mead, and butterflies for Sloane. 10  
 Think we all these are for himself? no more  
 Than his fine wife, alas! or finer whore.

For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?  
 Only to show how many tastes he wanted.  
 What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste?  
 Some demon whisper'd, "Visto! have a taste."  
 Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool,  
 And needs no rod but Ripley with a rule.  
 See! sportive fate, to punish awkward pride,  
 Bids Bubo build, and sends him such a guide: 20  
 A standing sermon, at each year's expense,  
 That never coxcomb reach'd magnificence!

You show us, Rome was glorious, not profuse,  
 And pompous buildings once were things of use.  
 Yet shall, my lord, your just, your noble rules  
 Fill half the land with imitating fools;  
 Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,  
 And of one beauty many blunders make;  
 Load some vain church with old theatric state,  
 Turn arcs of Triumph to a garden-gate; 30  
 Reverse your ornaments, and hang them all  
 On some patch'd dog-hole eked with ends of wall;  
 Then clap four slices of pilaster on't,  
 That laced with bits of rustic makes a front;  
 Shall call the winds through long arcades to roar,  
 Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door:



Conscious they act a true Palladian part,  
And if they starve, they starve by rules of art.

Oft have you hinted to your brother peer,  
A certain truth, which many buy too dear: 40  
Something there is more needful than expense,  
And something previous e'en to taste — 't is sense;  
Good sense, which only is the gift of Heaven,  
And, though no science, fairly worth the seven:  
A light which in yourself you must perceive;  
Jones and Le Nôtre have it not to give.

To build, to plant, whatever you intend,  
To rear the column, or the arch to bend,  
To swell the terrace, or to sink the grot;  
In all, let Nature never be forgot: 50  
But treat the goddess like a modest fair,  
Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare;  
Let not each beauty every where be spied,  
Where half the skill is decently to hide.  
He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,  
Surprises, varies, and conceals the bounds.

Consult the genius of the place in all;  
That tells the waters or to rise or fall;  
Or helps the ambitious hill the heavens to scale,  
Or scoops in circling theatres the vale; 60  
Calls in the country, catches opening glades,  
Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;  
Now breaks, or now directs, the intending lines,  
Paints as you plant, and as you work designs.

Still follow sense, of every art the soul,  
Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole,  
Spontaneous beauties all around advance,  
Start e'en from difficulty, strike from chance:  
Nature shall join you; time shall make it grow  
A work to wonder at — perhaps a Stow. 70

Without it, proud Versailles! thy glory falls;  
And Nero's terraces desert their walls:  
The vast parterres a thousand hands shall make,



Lo! Cobham comes, and floats them with a lake;  
 Or cut wide views through mountains to the plain,  
 You 'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.  
 E'en in an ornament its place remark,  
 Nor in a hermitage set Dr. Clarke.

Behold Villario's ten years' toil complete,  
 His quincunx darkens, his espaliers meet; 80  
 The wood supports the plain, the parts unite,  
 And strength of shade contends with strength of light;  
 A waving glow the bloomy beds display,  
 Blushing in bright diversities of day,  
 With silver-quivering rills meander'd o'er —  
 Enjoy them, you! Villario can no more:  
 Tired of the scene parterres and fountains yield,  
 He finds at last he better likes a field.

Through his young woods how pleased Sabinus stray'd,  
 Or sat delighted in the thickening shade, 90  
 With annual joy the reddening shoots to greet,  
 Or see the stretching branches long to meet!  
 His son's fine taste an opener vista loves,  
 Foe to the Dryads of his father's groves!  
 One boundless green, or flourish'd carpet views,  
 With all the mournful family of yews:  
 The thriving plants ignoble broomsticks made,  
 Now sweep those alleys they were born to shade.

At Timon's villa let us pass a day, 99  
 Where all cry out, "What sums are thrown away!"  
 So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air,  
 Soft and agreeable come never there.  
 Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a drought  
 As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.  
 To compass this, his building is a town,  
 His pond an ocean, his parterre a down:  
 Who but must laugh, the master when he sees,  
 A puny insect, shivering at a breeze!  
 Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!  
 The whole a labour'd quarry above ground. 110



Two Cupids squirt before: a lake behind  
 Improves the keenness of the norder wind,  
 His gardens next your admiration call,  
 On every side you look, behold the wall!  
 No pleasing intricacies intervene,  
 No artful wildness to perplex the scene;  
 Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,  
 And half the platform just reflects the other.  
 The suffering eye inverted nature sees,  
 Trees cut to statues, statues thick as trees; 120  
 With here a fountain, never to be play'd,  
 And there a summer-house that knows no shade;  
 Here Amphitrite sails through myrtle bowers;  
 There gladiators fight, or die in flowers;  
 Unwater'd see the drooping sea-horse mourn,  
 And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty urn.

My lord advances with majestic mien,  
 Smit with the mighty pleasure to be seen:  
 But soft — by regular approach — not yet — 129  
 First through the length of yon hot terrace sweat;  
 And when up ten steep slopes you've dragg'd your thighs,  
 Just at his study-door he'll bless your eyes.

His study! with what authors is it stored?  
 In books, not authors, curious is my lord;  
 To all their dated backs he turns you round;  
 These Aldus printed, those Du Sueil has bound!  
 Lo, some are vellum, and the rest as good,  
 For all his lordship knows, but they are wood!  
 For Locke or Milton, 't is in vain to look;  
 These shelves admit not any modern book. 140

And now the chapel's silver bell you hear,  
 That summons you to all the pride of prayer:  
 Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,  
 Make the soul dance upon a jig to heaven.  
 On painted ceilings you devoutly stare,  
 Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,  
 Or gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,



And bring all Paradise before your eye.  
 To rest, the cushion and soft dean invite,  
 Who never mentions hell to ears polite.

150

But, hark! the chiming clocks to dinner call;  
 A hundred footsteps scrape the marble hall:  
 The rich buffet well-colour'd serpents grace,  
 And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.  
 Is this a dinner? this a genial room?  
 No 't is a temple, and a hecatomb.  
 A solemn sacrifice perform'd in state,  
 You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.  
 So quick retires each flying course, you 'd swear  
 Sancho's dread doctor and his wand were there.  
 Between each act the trembling salvers ring,  
 From soup to sweet wine, and God bless the king.  
 In plenty starving, tantalized in state:  
 And complaisantly help'd to all I hate,  
 Treated, caress'd, and tired, I take my leave,  
 Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve;  
 I curse such lavish cost and little skill,  
 And swear no day was ever pass'd so ill.

161

Yet hence the poor are clothed, the hungry fed;  
 Health to himself, and to his infants bread,  
 The labourer bears: what his hard heart denies,  
 His charitable vanity supplies.

170

Another age shall see the golden ear  
 Imbrown the slope, and nod on the parterre,  
 Deep harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,  
 And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.

Who then shall grace, or who improve the soil?  
 Who plants like Bathurst, or who builds like Boyle.  
 'T is use alone that sanctifies expense,  
 And splendor borrows all her rays from sense.

His father's acres who enjoys in peace,  
 Or makes his neighbours glad, if he increase;  
 Whose cheerful tenants bless their yearly toil,  
 Yet to their lord owe more than to the soil;

181



Whose ample lawns are not ashamed to feed  
The milky heifer and deserving steed;  
Whose rising forests, not for pride or show,  
But future buildings, future navies, grow:  
Let his plantations stretch from down to down,  
First shade a country, and then raise a town. 190

You, too, proceed! make falling arts your care,  
Erect new wonders, and the old repair;  
Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,  
And be whate'er Vitruvius was before:  
Till kings call forth the ideas of your mind  
(Proud to accomplish what such hands design'd),  
Bid harbours open, public ways extend,  
Bid temples worthier of the God ascend;  
Bid the broad arch the dangerous flood contain,  
The mole projected break the roaring main; 200  
Back to his bounds their subject sea command,  
And roll obedient rivers through the land:  
These honours peace to happy Britain brings;  
These are imperial works, and worthy kings.

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## EPISTLE V.

T O M R. A D D I S O N.

*Occasioned by his Dialogues on Medals.*


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This was originally written in the year 1715, when Mr. Addison intended to publish his book of medals; it was some time before he was secretary of state; but not published till Mr. Tickell's edition of his works; at which time his verses on Mr. Craggs, which conclude the poem, were added, viz. in 1720.

As the third Epistle treated of the extremes of avarice and profusion; and the fourth took up one particular branch of the latter, namely, the vanity of expense in people of wealth and quality, and was therefore a corollary to the third; so this treats of one circumstance of that vanity, as it appears in the common collectors of old coins; and is, therefore, a corollary to the fourth.

---

SEE the wild waste of all-devouring years!  
 How Rome her own sad sepulchre appears!  
 With nodding arches, broken temples spread!  
 The very tombs now vanish'd like their dead!  
 Imperial wonders raised on nations spoil'd,  
 Where mix'd with slaves the groaning martyr toil'd;  
 Huge theatres, that now unpeopled woods,  
 Now drain'd a distant country of her floods:  
 Fanes, which admiring gods with pride survey;  
 Statues of men, scarce less alive than they!  
 Some felt the silent stroke of mouldering age,  
 Some hostile fury, some religious rage;  
 Barbarian blindness, Christian zeal conspire,  
 And papal piety, and Gothic fire.  
 Perhaps, by its own ruins saved from flame,



Some buried marble half preserves a name ;  
 That name the learn'd with fierce disputes pursue,  
 And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.

Ambition sigh'd: she found it vain to trust  
 The faithless column and the crumbling bust; 20  
 Huge moles, whose shadow stretch'd from shore to shore,  
 Their ruins perish'd, and their place no more!  
 Convinced, she now contracts her vast design,  
 And all her triumphs shrink into a coin.  
 A narrow orb each crowded conquest keeps,  
 Beneath her palm here sad Judea weeps.  
 Now scantier limits the proud arch confine,  
 And scarce are seen the prostrate Nile or Rhine;  
 A small Euphrates through the piece is roll'd,  
 And little eagles wave their wings in gold. 30

The medal faithful to its charge of fame,  
 Through climes and ages bears each form and name:  
 In one short view subjected to our eye,  
 Gods, emperors, heroes, sages, beauties, lie.  
 With sharpen'd sight pale antiquaries pore,  
 The inscription value, but the rust adore.  
 This the blue varnish, that the green endears,  
 The sacred rust of twice ten hundred years!  
 To gain Pescennius one employs his schemes,  
 One grasps a Cecrops in ecstatic dreams 40  
 Poor Vadius, long with learned spleen devour'd,  
 Can taste no pleasure since his shield was scour'd;  
 And Curio, restless by the fair-one's side,  
 Sighs for an Otho, and neglects his bride.

Theirs is the vanity, the learning thine:  
 Touch'd by thy hand, again Rome's glories shine;  
 Her gods and godlike heroes rise to view,  
 And all her faded garlands bloom anew.  
 Nor blush these studies thy regard engage:  
 These pleased the fathers of poetic rage: 50  
 The verse and sculpture bore an equal part,  
 And art reflected images to art.



Oh, when shall Britain, conscious of her claim,  
Stand emulous of Greek and Roman fame?  
In living medals see her wars enroll'd,  
And vanquish'd realms supply recording gold?  
Here, rising bold, the patriot's honest face;  
There, warriors frowning in historic brass:  
Then future ages with delight shall see  
How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's looks agree; 60  
Or in fair series laurell'd bards be shown,  
A Virgil there, and here an Addison.  
Then shall thy Craggs (and let me call him mine)  
On the cast ore, another Pollio, shine:  
With aspect open shall erect his head,  
And round the orb in lasting notes be read, —  
"Statesman, yet friend to truth! of soul sincere,  
In action faithful, and in honour clear;  
Who broke no promise, served no private end,  
Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend; 70  
Ennobled by himself, by all approved,  
And praised, unenvied, by the muse he loved."

---



## MISCELLANIES.

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ON RECEIVING FROM  
THE RIGHT HON. LADY FRANCES SHIRLEY

*A Standish and Two Pens.*

YES, I beheld the Athenian queen  
Descend in all her sober charms;  
And, "Take," she said, and smiled serene,  
"Take at this hand celestial arms:

"Secure the radiant weapons wield;  
This golden lance shall guard desert,  
And if a vice dares keep the field,  
This steel shall stab it to the heart."

Awed, on my bended knees I fell,  
Received the weapons of the sky;  
And dipp'd them in the sable well,  
The fount of fame or infamy.

"What well? what weapon?" Flavia cries,  
"A standish, steel and golden pen!  
It came from Bertrand's, not the skies;  
I gave it you to write again.

"But, friend, take heed whom you attack;  
You'll bring a house, I mean of peers,  
Red, blue, and green, nay, white and black,  
L\*\*\*\*\* and all about your ears.

"You'd write as smooth again on glass,  
And run on ivory so glib,  
As not to stick at fool or ass,  
Nor stop at flattery or fib.



“Athenian queen! and sober charms!  
 I tell you, fool, there's nothing in't:  
 'T is Venus, Venus gives these arms;  
 In Dryden's Virgil see the print.

“Come, if you'll be a quiet soul,  
 That dares tell neither truth nor lies,  
 I'll list you in the harmless roll  
 Of those that sing of these poor eyes.”

---

## EPISTLE TO ROBERT, EARL OF OXFORD AND EARL MORTIMER.

*Sent to the Earl of Oxford, with Dr. Parnell's Poems, published by our Author, after the said Earl's Imprisonment in the Tower and Retreat into the Country, in the Year 1721.*

SUCH were the notes thy once-loved poet sung,  
 Till death untimely stopp'd his tuneful tongue.  
 Oh, just beheld, and lost! admired, and mourn'd!  
 With softest manners, gentlest arts adorn'd!  
 Bless'd in each science, bless'd in every strain!  
 Dear to the muse! to Harley dear — in vain!  
 For him, thou oft hast bid the world attend,  
 Fond to forget the statesman in the friend;  
 For Swift and him, despised the farce of state,  
 The sober follies of the wise and great;  
 Dexterous, the craving, fawning crowd to quit,  
 And pleased to escape from flattery to wit.

Absent or dead, still let a friend be dear  
 (A sigh the absent claims, the dead a tear,  
 Recall those nights that closed thy toilsome days,  
 Still hear thy Parnell in his living lays,  
 Who, careless now of interest, fame, or fate,  
 Perhaps forgets that Oxford e'er was great;  
 Or, deeming meanest what we greatest call,  
 Beholds thee glorious only in thy fall.



And sure, if aught below the seats divine  
 Can touch immortals, 't is a soul like thine:  
 A soul supreme, in each hard instance tried,  
 Above all pain, and passion, and all pride,  
 The rage of power, the blast of public breath,  
 The lust of lucre, and the dread of death.

In vain to deserts thy retreat is made;  
 The muse attends thee to thy silent shade:  
 'T is hers the brave man's latest steps to trace,  
 Re-judge his acts, and dignify disgrace.  
 When interest calls off all her sneaking train,  
 And all the obliged desert, and all the vain;  
 She waits, or to the scaffold, or the cell,  
 When the last lingering friend has bid farewell.  
 E'en now she shades thy evening-walk with bays  
 (No hireling she, no prostitute to praise);  
 E'en now, observant of the parting ray,  
 Eyes the calm sun-set of thy various day,  
 Through fortune's cloud one truly great can see,  
 Nor fears to tell that Mortimer is he.

---

## EPISTLE TO JAMES CRAGGS, ESQ.

*Secretary of State in the Year 1720.*

A SOUL as full of worth, as void of pride,  
 Which nothing seeks to show, or needs to hide;  
 Which nor to guilt nor fear its caution owes,  
 And boasts a warmth that from no passion flows:  
 A face untaught to feign; a judging eye  
 That darts severe upon a rising lie,  
 And strikes a blush through frontless flattery:  
 All this thou wert; and being this before,  
 Know, kings and fortune cannot make thee more.  
 Then scorn to gain a friend by servile ways,  
 Nor wish to lose a foe these virtues raise;



But candid, free, sincere, as you began,  
 Proceed — a minister, but still a man.  
 Be not (exalted to whate'er degree)  
 Ashamed of any friend, not e'en of me:  
 The patriot's plain, but untrod, path pursue;  
 If not, 't is I must be ashamed of you.

---

## EPISTLE TO MR. JERVAS;

*With Mr. Dryden's Translation of Fresnoy's Art of Painting.*

This Epistle, and the two following, were written some years before the rest, and originally printed in 1717.

THIS verse be thine, my friend, nor thou refuse  
 This, from no venal or ungrateful muse.  
 Whether thy hand strike out some free design,  
 Where life awakes, and dawns at every line;  
 Or blend in beauteous tints the colour'd mass,  
 And from the canvass call the mimic face:  
 Read these instructive leaves, in which conspire  
 Fresnoy's close art, and Dryden's native fire:  
 And reading wish, like theirs our fate and fame,  
 So mix'd our studies, and so join'd our name;  
 Like them to shine through long succeeding age,  
 So just thy skill, so regular my rage.

Smit with the love of sister-arts we came,  
 And met congenial, mingling flame with flame;  
 Like friendly colours found them both unite,  
 And each from each contract new strength and light.  
 How oft in pleasing tasks we wear the day,  
 While summer-suns roll unperceived away!  
 How oft our slowly-growing works impart,  
 While images reflect from art to art!  
 How oft review; each finding like a friend  
 Something to blame, and something to commend!



What flattering scenes our wandering fancy wrought,  
Rome's pompous glories rising to our thought!  
Together o'er the Alps methinks we fly,  
Fired with ideas of fair Italy.

With thee on Raphael's monument I mourn,  
Or wait inspiring dreams at Maro's urn:  
With thee repose where Tully once was laid,  
Or seek some ruin's formidable shade:  
While fancy brings the vanish'd piles to view,  
And builds imaginary Rome anew.

Here thy well-studied marbles fix our eye;  
A fading fresco here demands a sigh:  
Each heavenly piece unwearied we compare,  
Match Raphael's grace with thy loved Guido's air,  
Caracci's strength, Correggio's softer line,  
Paulo's free stroke, and Titian's warmth divine.

How finish'd with illustrious toil appears  
This small well-polish'd gem, the work of years!  
Yet still how faint by precept is express'd  
The living image in the painter's breast!  
Thence endless streams of fair ideas flow,  
Strike in the sketch, or in the picture glow;  
Thence beauty, waking all her forms, supplies  
An angel's sweetness, or Bridgewater's eyes.

Muse! at that name thy sacred sorrows shed,  
Those tears eternal that embalm the dead!  
Call round her tomb each object of desire,  
Each purer frame inform'd with purer fire:  
Bid her be all that cheers or softens life,  
The tender sister, daughter, friend, and wife:  
Bid her be all that makes mankind adore;  
Then view this marble, and be vain no more!

Yet still her charms in breathing paint engage;  
Her modest cheek shall warm a future age.  
Beauty, frail flower that every season fears,  
Blooms in thy colours for a thousand years.  
Thus Churchill's race shall other hearts surprise,



And other beauties envy Worsley's eyes;  
 Each pleasing Blount shall endless smiles bestow,  
 And soft Belinda's blush for ever glow.

Oh, lasting as those colours may they shine,  
 Free as thy stroke, yet faultless as thy line;  
 New graces yearly like thy works display,  
 Soft without weakness, without glaring gay;  
 Led by some rule, that guides, but not constrains;  
 And finish'd more through happiness than pains!  
 The kindred arts shall in their praise conspire,  
 One dip the pencil, and one string the lyre.  
 Yet should the Graces all thy figures place,  
 And breathe an air divine on every face;  
 Yet should the Muses bid my numbers roll  
 Strong as their charms, and gentle as their soul;  
 With Zeuxis' Helen thy Bridgewater vie,  
 And these be sung till Granville's Myra die:  
 Alas! how little from the grave we claim!  
 Thou but preservest a face, and I a name.

---

## EPISTLE TO MISS BLOUNT;

*With the Works of Voiture.*

In these gay thoughts the Loves and Graces shine,  
 And all the writer lives in every line:  
 His easy art may happy nature seem,  
 Trifles themselves are elegant in him.  
 Sure to charm all was his peculiar fate,  
 Who without flattery pleased the fair and great;  
 Still with esteem no less conversed than read;  
 With wit well-natured, and with books well-bred:  
 His heart, his mistress and his friend did share;  
 His time, the muse, the witty, and the fair.  
 Thus wisely careless, innocently gay,  
 Cheerful he play'd the trifle, life, away;



Till fate, scarce felt, his gentle breath suppress'd,  
As smiling infants sport themselves to rest.  
E'en rival wits did Voiture's death deplore,  
And the gay mourn'd who never mourn'd before;  
The truest hearts for Voiture heaved with sighs,  
Voiture was wept by all the brightest eyes:  
The Smiles and Loves had died in Voiture's death,  
But that for ever in his lines they breathe.

Let the strict life of graver mortals be  
A long, exact, and serious comedy;  
In every scene some moral let it teach,  
And, if it can, at once both please and preach.  
Let mine, an innocent gay farce appear,  
And more diverting still than regular,  
Have humour, wit, a native ease and grace,  
Though not too strictly bound to time and place:  
Critics in wit, or life, are hard to please;  
Few write to those, and none can live to these.

Too much your sex are by their forms confined,  
Severe to all, but most to womankind;  
Custom, grown blind with age, must be your guide;  
Your pleasuse is a vice, but not your pride;  
By nature yielding, stubborn but for fame;  
Made slaves by honour, and made fools by shame.  
Marriage may all those petty tyrants chase,  
But sets up one, a greater, in their place:  
Well might you wish for change by those accursed,  
But the last tyrant ever proves the worst.  
Still in constraint your suffering sex remains,  
Or bound in formal, or in real chains:  
Whole years neglected, for some months adored,  
The fawning servant turns a haughty lord.  
Ah, quit not the free innocence of life,  
For the dull glory of a virtuous wife;  
Nor let false shows, nor empty titles please:  
Aim not at joy, but rest content with ease.



The gods, to curse Pamela with her prayers,  
Gave the gilt coach and dappled Flanders mares,  
The shining robes, rich jewels, beds of state,  
And, to complete her bliss, a fool for mate.  
She glares in balls, front boxes, and the ring,  
A vain, unquiet, glittering, wretched thing!  
Pride, pomp, and state, but reach her outward part;  
She sighs, and is no duchess at her heart.

But, Madam, if the fates withstand, and you  
Are destined Hymen's willing victim too;  
Trust not too much your now resistless charms,  
Those, age or sickness, soon or late, disarms:  
Good-humour only teaches charms to last,  
Still makes new conquests, and maintains the past;  
Love raised on beauty will, like that, decay,  
Our hearts may bear its slender chain a day;  
As flowery bands in wantonness are worn,  
A morning's pleasure, and at evening torn;  
This binds in ties more easy, yet more strong,  
The willing heart, and only holds it long.

Thus Voiture's\* early care still shone the same,  
And Monthausier was only changed in name;  
By this, e'en now they live, e'en now they charm,  
Their wit still sparkling, and their flames still warm.

Now crown'd with myrtle, on the Elysian coast,  
Amid those lovers, joys his gentle ghost:  
Pleased, while with smiles his happy lines you view,  
And finds a fairer Rambouillet in you.  
The brightest eyes in France inspired his muse;  
The brightest eyes in Britain now peruse;  
And dead, as living, 't is our author's pride  
Still to charm those who charm the world beside.

---

\* Mademoiselle Paulet.



## EPISTLE TO THE SAME,

*On her leaving the Town after the Coronation, 1715.*

As some fond virgin, whom her mother's care  
 Drags from the town to wholesome country air  
 Just when she learns to roll a melting eye,  
 And hear a spark, yet think no danger nigh;  
 From the dear man unwilling she must sever,  
 Yet takes one kiss before she parts for ever:  
 Thus from the world fair Zephalinda flew,  
 Saw others happy, and with sighs withdrew;  
 Not that their pleasures caused her discontent,  
 She sigh'd, not that they stay'd, but that she went.

She went to plain-work, and to purling brooks,  
 Old-fashion'd halls, dull aunts, and croaking rooks:  
 She went from opera, park, assembly, play,  
 To morning-walks, and prayers three hours a-day;  
 To part her time 't wixt reading and bohea,  
 To muse, and spill her solitary tea;  
 Or o'er cold coffee trifle with the spoon,  
 Count the slow clock, and dine exact at noon;  
 Divert her eyes with pictures in the fire,  
 Hum half a tune, tell stories to the 'squire;  
 Up to her godly garret after seven,  
 There starve and pray, for that 's the way to heaven.

Some 'squire, perhaps, you take delight to rack;  
 Whose game is whist, whose treat a toast in sack:  
 Who visits with a gun, presents you birds,  
 Then gives a smacking buss, and cries, — "No words!"  
 Or with his hounds comes hallooing from the stable,  
 Makes love with nods, and knees beneath a table;  
 Whose laughs are hearty, though his jests are coarse,  
 And loves you best of all things — but his horse.

In some fair evening, on your elbow laid,  
 You dream of triumphs in the rural shade;



In pensive thought recall the fancied scene,  
 See coronations rise on every green;  
 Before you pass the imaginary sights  
 Of lords, and earls, and dukes, and garter'd knights,  
 While the spread fan o'ershades your closing eyes;  
 Then give one flirt, and all the vision flies.  
 Thus vanish sceptres, coronets. and balls,  
 And leave you in lone woods, or empty walls!

So when your slave, at some dear idle time,  
 Not plagued with head-aches, or the want of rhyme,  
 Stands in the streets, abstracted from the crew,  
 And while he seems to study, thinks of you;  
 Just when his fancy paints your sprightly eyes,  
 Or sees the blush of soft Parthenia rise,  
 Gay pats my shoulder, and you vanish quite,  
 Streets, chairs, and coxcombs, rush upon my sight;  
 Vex'd to be still in town, I knit my brow,  
 Look sour, and hum a tune, as you may now.

---

## THE BASSET-TABLE,

AN ECLOGUE.

---

CARDELIA. SMILINDA.

---

CARDELIA.

THE basset-table spread, the tallier come;  
 Why stays Smilinda in the dressing-room?  
 Rise, pensive nymph; the tallier waits for you.

SMILINDA.

Ah, Madam, since my Sharper is untrue,  
 I joyless make my once adored alphiew.  
 I saw him stand behind Ombrelia's chair,  
 And whisper with that soft deluding air,  
 And those feign'd sighs which cheat the listening fair.



CARDELIA.

Is this the cause of your romantic strains?  
A mightier grief my heavy heart sustains.  
As you by love, so I by fortune cross'd;  
One, one bad deal, three septlevas have lost.

SMILINDA.

Is that the grief, which you compare with mine?  
With ease the smiles of fortune I resign:  
Would all my gold in one bad deal were gone,  
Were lovely Sharper mine, and mine alone.

CARDELIA.

A lover lost, is but a common care;  
And prudent nymphs against that change prepare:  
The knave of clubs thrice lost; oh! who could guess  
This fatal stroke, this unforeseen distress?

SMILINDA.

See Betty Lovet! very à-propos,  
She all the cares of love and play does know:  
Dear Betty shall the important point decide;  
Betty who oft the pain of each has tried:  
Impartial, she shall say who suffers most,  
By cards, ill-usage, or by lovers lost.

LOVET.

Tell, tell your griefs; attentive will I stay,  
Though time is precious, and I want some tea.

CARDELIA.

Behold this equipage, by Mathers wrought,  
With fifty guineas (a great penn'worth) bought.  
See, on the tooth-pick Mars and Cupid strive;  
And both the struggling figures seem alive.  
Upon the bottom shines the queen's bright face:  
A myrtle foliage round the thimble-case.  
Jove, Jove himself does on the scissars shine;  
The metal, and the workmanship, divine!



## SMILINDA.

This snuff-box, — once the pledge of Sharper's love,  
 When rival beauties for the present strove;  
 At Corticelli's he the raffle won;  
 Then first his passion was in public shown:  
 Hazardia blush'd, and turn'd her head aside,  
 A rival's envy (all in vain) to hide.  
 This snuff-box, — on the hinge see brilliants shine!  
 This snuff-box will I stake; the prize is mine.

## CARDELIA.

Alas! far lesser losses than I bear,  
 Have made a soldier sigh, a lover swear.  
 And, oh! what makes the disappointment hard,  
 'T was my own lord that drew the fatal card.  
 In complaisance I took the queen he gave;  
 Though my own secret wish was for the knave.  
 The knave won sonica, which I had chose;  
 And the next pull, my septleva I lose.

## SMILINDA.

But, ah! what aggravates the killing smart,  
 The cruel thought, that stabs me to the heart;  
 This cursed Ombrelia, this undoing fair,  
 By whose vile arts this heavy grief I bear;  
 She, at whose name I shed these spiteful tears,  
 She owes to me the very charms she wears.  
 An awkward thing when first she came to town:  
 Her shape unfashion'd, and her face unknown;  
 She was my friend; I taught her first to spread  
 Upon her sallow cheeks enlivening red:  
 I introduced her to the park and plays;  
 And by my interest, Cozens made her stays.  
 Ungrateful wretch, with mimic airs grown pert,  
 She dares to steal my favourite lover's heart!

## CARDELIA.

Wretch that I was! how often have I swore,  
 When Winnall tallied, I would punt no more!



I know the bite, yet to my ruin run;  
And see the folly, which I cannot shun.

SMILINDA.

How many maids have Sharper's vows deceived!  
How many cursed the moment they believed!  
Yet his known falsehoods could no warning prove:  
Ah! what is warning to a maid in love?

CARDELIA.

But of what marble must that breast be form'd,  
To gaze on Basset, and remain unwarm'd?  
When kings, queens, knaves, are set in decent rank;  
Exposed in glorious heaps the tempting bank,  
Guineas, half-guineas, all the shining train;  
The winner's pleasure, and the loser's pain:  
In bright confusion open rouleaus lie,  
They strike the soul, and glitter in the eye.  
Fired by the sight, all reason I disdain;  
My passions rise, and will not bear the rein.  
Look upon Basset, you who reason boast;  
And see if reason must not there be lost.

SMILINDA.

What more than marble must that heart compose,  
Can harken coldly to my Sharper's vows?  
Then, when he trembles! when his blushes rise!  
When awful love seems melting in his eyes!  
With eager beats his Mechlin cravat moves:  
"He loves," — I whisper to myself, "He loves!"  
Such unfeign'd passion in his looks appears,  
I lose all memory of my former fears;  
My panting heart confesses all his charms,  
I yield at once, and sink into his arms.  
Think of that moment, you who prudence boast;  
For such a moment, prudence well were lost.

CARDELIA.

At the Groom-porter's batter'd bullies play,  
Some dukes at Marybone bowl time away.



But who the bowl, or rattling dice compares  
To Basset's heavenly joys, and pleasing cares?

SMILINDA.

Soft Simplicetta dotes upon a beau;  
Prudina likes a man, and laughs at show.  
Their several graces in my Sharper meet;  
Strong as the footman, as the master sweet.

LOVET.

Cease your contention, which has been too long;  
I grow impatient, and the tea's too strong.  
Attend, and yield to what I now decide;  
The equipage shall grace Smilinda's side:  
The snuff-box to Cardelia I decree;  
Now leave complaining, and begin your tea.

---

## ANSWER TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTION OF MRS. HOWE.

WHAT is prudery?

'T is a beldam,  
Seen with wit and beauty seldom.  
'T is a fear that starts at shadows;  
'T is (no, 't is n't) like miss Meadows;  
'T is a virgin hard of feature,  
Old, and void of all good-nature;  
Lean and fretful; would seem wise;  
Yet plays the fool before she dies.  
'T is an ugly, envious shrew,  
That rails at dear Lepell and you.

---



*Occasioned by some Verses of*

# HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

MUSE, 't is enough: at length thy labour ends,  
And thou shalt live, for Buckingham commends.  
Let crowds of critics now my verse assail,  
Let Dennis write, and nameless numbers rail:  
This more than pays whole years of thankless pain,  
Time, health, and fortune, are not lost in vain.  
Sheffield approves, consenting Phœbus bends,  
And I and malice from this hour are friends.

---

## PROLOGUE BY MR. POPE,

*To a Play for Mr. Dennis's Benefit, in 1733, when he was old,  
blind, and in great distress, a little before his Death.*

As when that hero, who in each campaign  
Had braved the Goth, and many a Vandal slain,  
Lay fortune-struck, a spectacle of woe!  
Wept by each friend, forgiven by every foe:  
Was there a generous, a reflecting mind,  
But pitied Belisarius old and blind?  
Was there a chief but melted at the sight?  
A common soldier, but who clubb'd his mite?  
Such, such emotions should in Britons rise,  
When press'd by want and weakness Dennis lies;  
Dennis, who long had warr'd with modern Huns,  
Their quibbles routed, and defied their puns;  
A desperate bulwark, sturdy, firm, and fierce,  
Against the Gothic sons of frozen verse:  
How changed from him who made the boxes groan,  
And shook the stage with thunder all his own!



Stood up to dash each vain pretender's hope,  
 Maul the French tyrant, or pull down the pope!  
 If there's a Briton then, true bred and born,  
 Who holds dragoons and wooden shoes in scorn;  
 If there's a critic of distinguish'd rage;  
 If there's a senior, who contemns this age;  
 Let him to-night his just assistance lend,  
 And be the critic's, Briton's, old man's friend.

---

## PROLOGUE TO SOPHONISBA.

*By Pope and Mallet.\**

WHEN learning, after the long Gothic night,  
 Fair, o'er the western world renew'd its light,  
 With arts arising, Sophonisba rose:  
 The tragic muse, returning, wept her woes.  
 With her the Italian scene first learn'd to glow;  
 And the first tears for her were taught to flow.  
 Her charms the Gallic muses next inspired:  
 Corneille himself saw, wonder'd, and was fired.

What foreign theatres with pride have shown,  
 Britain, by juster title, makes her own.  
 When freedom is the cause, 't is hers to fight;  
 And hers, when freedom is the theme, to write,  
 For this a British author bids again  
 The heroine rise, to grace the British scene.  
 Here, as in life, she breathes her genuine flame;  
 She asks, what bosom has not felt the same?  
 Asks of the British youth — Is silence there?  
 She dares to ask it of the British fair.

\* I have been told by Savage, that of the Prologue to Sophonisba, the first part was written by Pope, who could not be persuaded to finish it; and that the concluding lines were written by Mallet.



To-night our home-spun author would be true,  
At once, to nature, history, and you.  
Well-pleased to give our neighbours due applause,  
He owns their learning, but disdains their laws.  
Not to his patient touch, or happy flame,  
'T is to his British heart he trusts for fame.  
If France excel him in one free-born thought,  
The man, as well as poet, is in fault.

Nature! informer of the poet's art,  
Whose force alone can raise or melt the heart,  
Thou art his guide; each passion, every line,  
Whate'er he draws to please, must all be thine.  
Be thou his judge: in every candid breast,  
Thy silent whisper is the sacred test.

---

### MACER: — A CHARACTER.

WHEN simple Macer, now of high renown,  
First sought a poet's fortune in the town,  
'T was all the ambition his high soul could feel,  
To wear red stockings, and to dine with Steele.  
Some ends of verse his betters might afford;  
And gave the harmless fellow a good word.  
Set up with these, he ventured on the town,  
And with a borrow'd play outdid poor Crown.  
There he stopp'd short, nor since has writ a tittle,  
But has the wit to make the most of little:  
Like stunted hide-bound trees, that just have got  
Sufficient sap at once to bear and rot.  
Now he begs verse, and what he gets commends,  
Not of the wits his foes, but fools his friends.

So some coarse country-wench, almost decay'd,  
Trudges to town, and first turns chambermaid;  
Awkward and supple, each devoir to pay,  
She flatters her good lady twice a-day;



Thought wondrous honest, thought of mean degree,  
And strangely liked for her simplicity:  
In a translated suit, then tries the town,  
With borrow'd pins, and patches not her own:  
But just endured the winter she began,  
And in four months a batter'd harridan.  
Now nothing left, but wither'd, pale, and shrunk,  
To bawd for others, and go shares with punk.

---

TO MR. JOHN MOORE,

*Author of the celebrated Worm-Powder.*

How much, egregious Moore, are we  
Deceived by shows and forms!  
Whate'er we think, whate'er we see,  
All human kind are worms.

Man is a very worm by birth,  
Vile, reptile, weak, and vain!  
A while he crawls upon the earth,  
Then shrinks to earth again.

That woman is a worm, we find  
E'er since our grandame's evil;  
She first conversed with her own kind,  
That ancient worm, the devil.

The learn'd themselves we book-worms name;  
The blockhead is a slow-worm;  
The nymph whose tail is all on flame,  
Is aptly term'd a glow-worm.

The fops are painted butterflies,  
That flutter for a day;  
First from a worm they take their rise,  
And in a worm decay.



The flatterer an earwig grows;  
Thus worms suit all conditions:  
Misers are muck-worms, silk-worms beaus,  
And death-watches physicians.

That statesmen have the worm, is seen  
By all their winding play;  
Their conscience is a worm within,  
That gnaws them night and day.

Ah, Moore! thy skill were well employ'd,  
And greater gain would rise,  
If thou couldst make the courtier void  
The worm that never dies!

O learned friend of Abchurch-lane,  
Who sett'st our entrails free;  
Vain is thy art, thy powder vain,  
Since worms shall eat e'en thee.

Our fate thou only canst adjourn  
Some few short years, no more!  
E'en Button's wits to worms shall turn,  
Who maggots were before.

---

## SONG, BY A PERSON OF QUALITY;

*Written in the Year 1733.*

FLUTTERING spread thy purple pinions,  
Gentle Cupid, o'er my heart;  
I a slave in thy dominions;  
Nature must give way to art.

Mild Arcadians, ever blooming,  
Nightly nodding o'er your flocks,  
See my weary days consuming,  
All beneath yon flowery rocks.



Thus the Cyprian goddess weeping,  
Mourn'd Adonis, darling youth;  
Him the boar, in silence creeping,  
Gored with unrelenting tooth.

Cynthia, tune harmonious numbers;  
Fair discretion, string the lyre;  
Soothe my ever-waking slumbers;  
Bright Apollo, lend thy choir.

Gloomy Pluto, king of terrors,  
Arm'd in adamantine chains,  
Lead me to the crystal mirrors,  
Watering soft Elysian plains.

Mournful cypress, verdant willow,  
Gilding my Aurelia's brows,  
Morpheus hovering o'er my pillow,  
Hear me pay my dying vows.

Melancholy smooth Mæander,  
Swiftly purling in a round,  
On thy margin lovers wander,  
With thy flowery chaplets crown'd.

Thus when Philomela drooping,  
Softly seeks her silent mate,  
See the bird of Juno stooping;  
Melody resigns to fate.

---

### ON A CERTAIN LADY AT COURT.

I know the thing that's most uncommon;  
(Envy, be silent and attend!)

I know a reasonable woman,  
Handsome and witty, yet a friend.



Not warp'd by passion, awed by rumour,  
 Not grave through pride, nor gay through folly;  
 An equal mixture of good-humour,  
 And sensible soft melancholy.

“Has she no faults, then,” Envy says, “Sir?”  
 Yes, she has one, I must aver:  
 When all the world conspires to praise her,  
 The woman's deaf, and does not hear.

---

### ON HIS GROTTA AT TWICKENHAM,

*Composed of Marble, Spars, Gems, Ores, and Minerals.*

THOU who shalt stop, where Thames' translucent wave  
 Shines a broad mirror through the shadowy cave;  
 Where lingering drops from mineral roofs distil,  
 And pointed crystals break the sparkling rill,  
 Unpolish'd gems no ray on pride bestow,  
 And latent metals innocently glow:  
 Approach. Great Nature studiously behold!  
 And eye the mine, without a wish for gold.  
 Approach: but awful! lo! the Ægerian grot,  
 Where, nobly pensive, St. John sat and thought;  
 Where British sighs from dying Wyndham stole,  
 And the bright flame was shot through Marchmont's soul.  
 Let such, such only, tread this sacred floor,  
 Who dare to love their country, and be poor.

---

### TO MRS. M. B. ON HER BIRTHDAY.

OH, be thou bless'd with all that Heaven can send,  
 Long health, long youth, long pleasure, and a friend!  
 Not with those toys the female world admire,  
 Riches that vex, and vanities that tire.



With added years, if life bring nothing new,  
 But like a sieve let every blessing through,  
 Some joy still lost, as each vain year runs o'er,  
 And all we gain, some sad reflection more;  
 Is that a birthday? 't is, alas! too clear,  
 'T is but the funeral of the former year.

Let joy or ease, let affluence or content,  
 And the gay conscience of a life well spent,  
 Calm every thought, inspire every grace,  
 Glow in thy heart, and smile upon thy face.  
 Let day improve on day, and year on year,  
 Without a pain, a trouble, or a fear;  
 Till death unfelt that tender frame destroy,  
 In some soft dream, or ecstasy of joy.  
 Peaceful sleep out the sabbath of the tomb,  
 And wake to raptures in a life to come.

---

## TO MR. THOMAS SOUTHERN,

*On his Birthday, 1742.*

RESIGN'D to live, prepared to die,  
 With not one sin, but poetry,  
 This day Tom's fair account has run  
 (Without a blot) to eighty-one.  
 Kind Boyle, before his poet, lays  
 A table, with a cloth of bays;  
 And Ireland, mother of sweet singers,  
 Presents her harp still to his fingers.  
 The feast, his towering genius marks  
 In yonder wild-goose and the larks!  
 The mushrooms show his wit was sudden!  
 And for his judgment, lo a pudden!  
 Roast beef, though old, proclaims him stout,  
 And grace, although a bard, devout.



May Tom, whom heaven sent down to raise  
 The price of prologues and of plays,  
 Be every birth-day more a winner,  
 Digest his thirty-thousandth dinner;  
 Walk to his grave without reproach,  
 And scorn a rascal and a coach.

---

TO LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE.\*

In beauty or wit,  
 No mortal as yet,  
 To question your empire has dared;  
 But men of discerning  
 Have thought that in learning,  
 To yield to a lady was hard.

Impertinent schools,  
 With musty dull rules,  
 Have reading to females denied:  
 So papists refuse  
 The Bible to use,  
 Lest flocks should be wise as their guide.

'T was a woman at first  
 (Indeed she was cursed)  
 In knowledge that tasted delight,  
 And sages agree  
 The laws should decree  
 To the first of possessors the right.

\* This panegyric on Lady Mary Wortley Montague might have been suppressed by Mr. Pope, on account of her having satirized him in her verses to the imitator of Horace; which abuse he returned in the first satire of the second book of Horace.

From furious Sappho, scarce a milder fate,  
 P—d by her love, or libell'd by her hate.



Then bravely, fair dame,  
 Resume the old claim,  
 Which to your whole sex does belong;  
 And let men receive,  
 From a second bright Eve,  
 The knowledge of right and of wrong.

But if the first Eve  
 Hard doom did receive,  
 When only one apple had she,  
 What a punishment new  
 Shall be found out for you,  
 Who tasting, have robb'd the whole tree!

---

## THE FOURTH EPISTLE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE'S EPISTLES.\*

*A modern Imitation.*

SAY, \*\* St. John, who alone peruse  
 With candid eye, the mimic muse,  
 What schemes of politics, or laws,  
 In Gallic lands the patriot draws!  
 Is then a greater work in hand,  
 Than all the tomes of Haines's band?

\* This satire on Lord Bolingbroke, and the praise bestowed on him in a letter to Mr. Richardson, where Mr. Pope says,

The sons shall blush their fathers were his foes :

being so contradictory, probably occasioned the former to be suppressed. S.

\*\* Ad Albium Tibullum.

Albi nostrorum sermonum candide iudex,  
 Quid nunc te dicam facere in regione Pedaná?  
 Scribere, quod Cassi Parmensis opuscula vincat?



"Or shoots he folly as it flies?  
 Or catches manners as they rise?" \*  
 Or, urged by unquench'd native heat,  
 \*\* Does St. John Greenwich sports repeat?  
 Where (emulous of Chartres' fame)  
 E'en Chartres' self is scarce a name.  
 \*\*\* To you (the all-envied gift of heaven)  
 The indulgent gods, unask'd, have given  
 A form complete in every part,  
 And, to enjoy that gift, the art.  
 † What could a tender mother's care  
 Wish better to her favourite heir,  
 Than, wit, and fame, and lucky hours,  
 A stock of health, and golden showers,  
 And graceful fluency of speech,  
 Precepts before unknown to teach?  
 †† Amidst thy various ebbs of fear,  
 And gleaming hope, and black despair;  
 Yet let thy friend this truth impart;  
 A truth I tell with bleeding heart  
 (In justice for your labours past),  
 ††† That every day shall be your last;  
 That every hour your life renew  
 Is to your injured country due.

\* The lines here quoted occur in the *Essay on Man*.

\*\* An tacitum silvas inter reptare salubres?

\*\*\* ..... Dî tibi formam,  
 Dî tibi divitias dederunt, artemque fruendi.

† Quid voveat dulci nutricula majus alumno,  
 Qui sapere, et fari possit quæ sentiat, et cui  
 Gratia, fama, valetudo contingat abunde,  
 ..... non deficiente crumena?

†† Inter spem curamque, timores inter et iras.

††† Omnem crede diem tibi diluxisse supremum.  
 Me pinguem et nitidum bene curatâ cute vises,  
 Cum ridere voles Epicuri de grege porcum.



In spite of fears, of mercy spite,  
 My genius still must rail, and write.  
 Haste to thy Twickenham's safe retreat,  
 And mingle with the grumbling great:  
 There, half devour'd by spleen, you 'll find  
 The rhyming bubbler of mankind;  
 There (objects of our mutual hate)  
 We 'll ridicule both church and state.

---

### EPIGRAM ON MRS. TOFTS,

*A handsome Woman with a fine Voice, but very covetous  
 and proud.\**

So bright is thy beauty, so charming thy song,  
 As had drawn both the beasts and their Orpheus along;  
 But such is thy avarice, and such is thy pride,  
 That the beasts must have starved, and the poet have died.

---

### EPIGRAM.

*On one who made long Epitaphs.\*\**

FRIEND, for your epitaphs I 'm grieved,  
 Where still so much is said;  
 One half will never be believed,  
 The other never read.

\* This epigram, first printed anonymously in Steele's Collection, and copied in the Miscellanies of Swift and Pope, is ascribed to Pope by Sir John Hawkins, in his History of Music—Mrs. Tofts, who was the daughter of a person in the family of Bishop Burnet, is celebrated as a singer little inferior, either for her voice or manner, to the best Italian women. She lived at the introduction of the opera into this kingdom, and sung in company with Nicolini; but, being ignorant of Italian, chanted her recitative in English, in answer to his Italian; yet the charms of their voices overcame the absurdity.

\*\* It is not generally known that the person here meant was Dr. Robert Freind, head master of Westminster-school.



## TO SIR GODFREY KNELLER,

*On his painting for me the Statues of Apollo, Venus,  
and Hercules.*

WHAT god, what genius, did the pencil move  
When Kneller painted these?  
'T was Friendship — warm as Phœbus, kind as Love,  
And strong as Hercules.

---

## A FAREWELL TO LONDON,

*In the Year 1715.*

DEAR, damn'd, distracting town, farewell!  
Thy fools no more I'll tease:  
This year in peace, ye critics, dwell,  
Ye harlots, sleep at ease!

Soft B\*\*\* and rough C\*\*\*\*\*, adieu!  
Earl Warwick make your moan,  
The lively H\*\*\*\*\*k and you  
May knock up whores alone.

To drink and droll be Rowe allow'd  
Till the third watchman toll;  
Let Jervis gratis paint, and Frowde  
Save three-pence and his soul.

Farewell Arbuthnot's raillery  
On every learned sot,  
And Garth, the best good Christian he,  
Although he knows it not.

Lintot, farewell! thy bard must go;  
Farewell, unhappy Tonson!  
Heaven gives thee, for thy loss of Rowe,  
Lean Philips, and fat Johnson.



Why should I stay? Both parties rage;  
My vixen mistress squalls;  
The wits in envious feuds engage;  
And Homer (damn him!) calls.

The love of arts lies cold and dead  
In Halifax's urn;  
And not one Muse of all he fed,  
Has yet the grace to mourn.

My friends, by turns, my friends confound,  
Betray, and are betray'd:  
Poor Y\*\*\*r's sold for fifty pound,  
And B\*\*\*\*\*ll is a jade.

Why make I friendships with the great,  
When I no favour seek?  
Or follow girls seven hours in eight? —  
I need but once a week.

Still idle, with a busy air,  
Deep whimsies to contrive;  
The gayest valetudinaire,  
Most thinking rake alive.

Solicitous for others' ends,  
Though fond of dear repose;  
Careless or drowsy with my friends,  
And frolic with my foes.

Luxurious lobster-nights, farewell,  
For sober, studious days!  
And Burlington's delicious meal,  
For salads, tarts, and pease!

Adieu to all but Gay alone,  
Whose soul sincere and free,  
Loves all mankind, but flatters none,  
And so may starve with me.

---



## A DIALOGUE.

Pope. SINCE my old friend is grown so great,  
 As to be minister of state,  
 I'm told (but 't is not true I hope)  
 That Craggs will be ashamed of Pope.

Craggs. Alas! if I am such a creature,  
 To grow the worse for growing greater;  
 Why, 'faith, in spite of all my brags,  
 'T is Pope must be ashamed of Craggs.

## EPIGRAM,

*Engraved on the Collar of a Dog, which I gave to his Royal Highness.*

I AM his Highness' dog at Kew;  
 Pray tell me, Sir, whose dog are you?

## EPIGRAM,

*Occasioned by an Invitation to Court.*

IN the lines that you sent are the muses and graces;  
 You've the nine in your wit, and the three in your faces.



## ON AN OLD GATE,

*Erected in Chiswick Gardens.*

O GATE, how camest thou here?

Gate. I was brought from Chelsea last year,

Batter'd with wind and weather.

Inigo Jones put me together.

Sir Hans Sloane

Let me alone:

Burlington brought me hither.

1742.

## A FRAGMENT.

WHAT are the falling rills, the pendent shades,  
 The morning bowers, the evening colonnades,  
 But soft recesses for the uneasy mind  
 To sigh unheard in, to the passing wind!  
 So the struck deer, in some sequester'd part,  
 Lies down to die (the arrow in his heart);  
 There hid in shades, and wasting day by day,  
 Inly he bleeds, and pants his soul away.

## VERSES LEFT BY MR. POPE,

*On his lying in the same Bed which Wilmot the celebrated Earl  
 of Rochester slept in, at Adderbury, then belonging to the  
 Duke of Argyle, July 9th, 1739.*

WITH no poetic ardour fired  
 I press'd the bed where Wilmot lay;  
 That here he loved, or here expired,  
 Begets no numbers grave or gay.



But in thy roof, Argyle, are bred  
Such thoughts as prompt the brave to lie  
Stretch'd out in honour's nobler bed,  
Beneath a nobler roof — the sky.

Such flames as high in patriots burn,  
Yet stoop to bless a child or wife;  
And such as wicked kings may mourn,  
When freedom is more dear than life.

---

### VERSES TO MR. C.

*St. James's Place, London, October 22.*

FEW words are best; I wish you well;  
Bethel, I'm told, will soon be here:  
Some morning-walks along the Mall,  
And evening friends, will end the year.

If, in this interval, between  
The falling leaf and coming frost,  
You please to see, on Twit'nam green,  
Your friend, your poet, and your host;

For three whole days you here may rest,  
From office, business, news, and strife;  
And (what most folks would think a jest)  
Want nothing else, except your wife.

---



## EPITAPHS.

---

His saltem accumulẽm donis, et fungar inani  
Munere!

---

VIRG.

### ON CHARLES EARL OF DORSET,

*In the Church of Withyam, in Sussex.*

DORSET, the grace of courts, the muses' pride,  
Patron of arts, and judge of nature, died.  
The scourge of pride, though sanctified or great,  
Of fops in learning, and of knaves in state:  
Yet soft his nature, though severe his lay,  
His anger moral, and his wisdom gay.  
Bless'd satirist! who touch'd the mean so true,  
As show'd vice had his hate and pity too.  
Bless'd courtier! who could king and country please,  
Yet sacred keep his friendships, and his ease.  
Bless'd peer! his great forefathers' every grace  
Reflecting, and reflected in his race;  
Where other Buckhursts, other Dorsets shine,  
And patrons still, or poets, deck the line.

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## ON SIR WILLIAM TRUMBALL,

*One of the principal Secretaries of State to King William the Third, who, having resigned his Place, died in his Retirement at Easthamsted, in Berkshire, 1716.*

A PLEASING form; a firm, yet cautious mind;  
Sincere, though prudent; constant, yet resign'd;  
Honour unchanged, a principle profess'd,  
Fix'd to one side, but moderate to the rest:  
An honest courtier, yet a patriot too;  
Just to his prince, and to his country true:  
Fill'd with the sense of age, the fire of youth,  
A scorn of wrangling, yet a zeal for truth:  
A generous faith, from superstition free;  
A love to peace, and hate of tyranny:  
Such this man was; who now from earth removed,  
At length enjoys that liberty he loved.

---

## ON THE HON. SIMON HARCOURT,

*Only Son of the Lord Chancellor Harcourt, at the Church of Stanton-Harcourt, in Oxfordshire, 1720.*

To this sad shrine, whoe'er thou art, draw near;  
Here lies the friend most loved, the son most dear;  
Who ne'er knew joy but friendship might divide,  
Or gave his father grief but when he died.

How vain is reason, eloquence how weak!  
If Pope must tell what Harcourt cannot speak.  
Oh let thy once-loved friend inscribe thy stone,  
And with a father's sorrows mix his own!

---



## ON JAMES CRAGGS, ESQ.

*In Westminster Abbey.*

JACOBUS CRAGGS,  
 REGI MAGNÆ BRITANNIÆ A SECRETIS ET CONSILIIS  
 SANCTIORIBUS,  
 PRINCIPIS PARITER AC POPULI AMOR ET DELICLÆ,  
 VIXIT, TITULIS ET INVIDIA MAJOR,  
 ANNOS, HEU PAUCOS, XXXV.  
 OB. FEB. XVI. MDCCXX.

STATESMAN, yet friend to truth! of soul sincere,  
 In action faithful, and in honour clear!  
 Who broke no promise, served no private end,  
 Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend;  
 Ennobled by himself, by all approved,  
 Praised, wept, and honour'd, by the muse he loved.

## INTENDED FOR MR. ROWE,

*In Westminster Abbey.*

THY reliques, Rowe, to this fair urn we trust,  
 And, sacred, place by Dryden's awful dust:  
 Beneath a rude and nameless stone he lies,  
 To which thy tomb shall guide inquiring eyes.  
 Peace to thy gentle shade, and endless rest!  
 Bless'd in thy genius, in thy love too bless'd!  
 One grateful woman to thy fame supplies  
 What a whole thankless land to his denies.

---



## ON MRS. CORBET,

*Who died of a Cancer in her Breast.*

HERE rests a woman, good without pretence,  
 Bless'd with plain reason, and with sober sense:  
 No conquests she, but o'er herself, desired,  
 No arts essay'd, but not to be admired.  
 Passion and pride were to her soul unknown,  
 Convinced that virtue only is our own.  
 So unaffected, so composed a mind;  
 So firm, yet soft; so strong, yet so refined;  
 Heaven, as its purest gold, by tortures tried;  
 The saint sustain'd it, but the woman died.

---

ON THE MONUMENT OF THE  
 HONOURABLE ROBERT DIGBY,  
 AND OF HIS SISTER MARY,

*Erected by their Father, the Lord Digby, in the Church  
 of Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, 1727.*

Go! fair example of untainted youth,  
 Of modest wisdom, and pacific truth;  
 Composed in sufferings, and in joy sedate,  
 Good without noise, without pretension great:  
 Just of thy word, in every thought sincere,  
 Who knew no wish but what the world might hear:  
 Of softest manners, unaffected mind,  
 Lover of peace, and friend of human-kind:  
 Go, live! for heaven's eternal year is thine,  
 Go, and exalt thy moral to divine!



And thou, bless'd maid! attendant on his doom,  
 Pensive hast follow'd to the silent tomb,  
 Steer'd the same course to the same quiet shore,  
 Not parted long, and now to part no more!  
 Go then, where only bliss sincere is known!  
 Go, where to love and to enjoy are one!

Yet take these tears, mortality's relief,  
 And till we share your joys, forgive our grief:  
 These little rites, a stone, a verse, receive;  
 'T is all a father, all a friend, can give!

---

### ON SIR GODFREY KNELLER.

*In Westminster Abbey, 1723.*

KNELLER, by Heaven, and not a master, taught,  
 Whose art was nature, and whose pictures thought;  
 Now for two ages having snatch'd from fate  
 Whate'er was beauteous, or whate'er was great,  
 Lies crown'd with princes' honours, poets' lays,  
 Due to his merit, and brave thirst of praise.

Living, great nature fear'd he might outvie  
 Her works; and, dying, fears herself may die.

---

### ON GENERAL HENRY WITHERS.

*In Westminster Abbey, 1729.*

HERE, Withers, rest! thou bravest, gentlest mind,  
 Thy country's friend, but more of human-kind.  
 O born to arms! O worth in youth approved!  
 O soft humanity, in age beloved!  
 For thee the hardy veteran drops a tear,  
 And the gay courtier feels the sigh sincere.



Withers, adieu! yet not with thee remove  
 Thy martial spirit, or thy social love!  
 Amidst corruption, luxury, and rage,  
 Still leave some ancient virtues to our age:  
 Nor let us say (those English glories gone)  
 The last true Briton lies beneath this stone.

---

### ON MR. ELIJAH FENTON.

*At Easthamsted, in Berks, 1730.*

THIS modest stone, what few vain marbles can,  
 May truly say, "Here lies an honest man:"  
 A poet, bless'd beyond the poet's fate,  
 Whom Heaven kept sacred from the proud and great:  
 Foe to loud praise, and friend to learned ease,  
 Content with science in the vale of peace,  
 Calmly he look'd on either life, and here  
 Saw nothing to regret, or there to fear;  
 From nature's temperate feast rose satisfied,  
 Thank'd Heaven that he had lived, and that he died.

---

### ON MR. GAY.

*In Westminster Abbey, 1732.*

OF manners gentle, of affections mild:  
 In wit, a man; simplicity, a child:  
 With native humour tempering virtuous rage,  
 Form'd to delight at once and lash the age:  
 Above temptation in a low estate,  
 And uncorrupted, e'en among the great:



A safe companion, and an easy friend,  
 Unblamed through life, lamented in thy end.  
 These are thy honours! not that here thy bust  
 Is mix'd with heroes, or with kings thy dust;  
 But that the worthy and the good shall say,  
 Striking their pensive bosoms — “Here lies Gay!”

---

ANOTHER.

WELL then! poor Gay lies under ground,  
 So there 's an end of honest Jack:  
 So little justice here he found,  
 'T is ten to one he 'll ne'er come back.

---

INTENDED FOR SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

*In Westminster Abbey.*

ISAACUS NEWTONUS:

Quem Immortalem

Testantur Tempus, Natura, Cœlum:

Mortalem

Hoc Marmor Fatetur.

NATURE and nature's laws lay hid in night:  
 God said, “Let Newton be!” and all was light.

---



## ON DR. FRANCIS ATTERBURY,

BISHOP OF ROCHESTER,

*Who died in Exile in Paris, 1732.*

[His only daughter having expired in his arms, immediately after she arrived in France to see him.]

## DIALOGUE.

*She.* YES, we have lived — one pang, and then we part!  
May Heaven, dear father! now have all thy heart.  
Yet, ah! how once we loved, remember still,  
Till you are dust like me.

*He.* Dear shade! I will:  
Then mix this dust with thine — O spotless ghost!  
O more than fortune, friends, or country lost!  
Is there on earth one care, one wish beside?  
Yes — “Save my country, Heaven,” — He said, and died.

---

## ON EDMUND DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM,

*Who died in the 19th year of his age, 1735.*

IF modest youth, with cool reflection crown'd,  
And every opening virtue blooming round,  
Could save a parent's justest pride from fate,  
Or add one patriot to a sinking state;  
This weeping marble had not ask'd thy tear,  
Or sadly told, how many hopes lie here!  
The living virtue now had shone approved,  
The senate heard him, and his country loved.  
Yet softer honours, and less noisy fame  
Attend the shade of gentle Buckingham:  
In whom a race, for courage famed and art,  
Ends in the milder merit of the heart;  
And, chiefs or sages long to Britain given,  
Pays the last tribute of a saint to Heaven.

---



FOR ONE WHO WOULD NOT BE BURIED  
IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

HEROES and kings! your distance keep;  
In peace let one poor poet sleep,  
Who never flatter'd folks like you:  
Let Horace blush, and Virgil too.

---

ANOTHER, ON THE SAME.

UNDER this marble, or under this sill,  
Or under this turf, or e'en what they will;  
Whatever an heir, or a friend in his stead,  
Or any good creature shall lay o'er my head;  
Lies one who ne'er cared, and still cares not a pin,  
What they said, or may say, of the mortal within:  
But who, living and dying, serene still and free,  
Trusts in God, that as well as he was, he shall be.

---

LORD CONINGSBY'S EPITAPH.\*

HERE lies Lord Coningsby — be civil;  
The rest God knows — so does the devil.

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\* This Epitaph, originally written on Picus Mirandula, is applied to F. Chartres, and printed among the works of Swift. See Hawkesworth's edition, vol. vi. S.



## ON BUTLER'S MONUMENT.

*Perhaps by Mr. Pope.\**

RESPECT to Dryden, Sheffield justly paid,  
 And noble Villers honour'd Cowley's shade:  
 But whence this Barber? — that a name so mean  
 Should, join'd with Butler's, on a tomb be seen:  
 This pyramid would better far proclaim,  
 To future ages humbler Settle's name:  
 Poet and patron then had been well pair'd,  
 The city printer, and the city bard.

\* Mr. Pope, in one of the prints from Scheemaker's monument of Shakspeare in Westminster Abbey, has sufficiently shown his contempt of Alderman Barber, by the following couplet, which is substituted in the place of "The cloud-capt towers, &c."

"Thus Britain loved me; and preserved my fame,  
 Clear from a Barber's or a Benson's name."

A. POPE.

THE END.



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